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# USSR REPORT MILITARY AFFAIRS

No. 1532

Moscow VOYENNO ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 5, May 80  
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## SOVIET ARMED FORCES: ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN WW II

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 5, May 80 signed to press  
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[Unattributed lead article: "The Great Liberation Mission of the Soviet Armed Forces"]

**[Text]** In the swift rush of time, 35 years have passed since the last shots of the fiercest, bloodiest war in the history of mankind rang out. But, as the scorched war years recede further into the past, the unfading feat of the Soviet people and the men of our valiant Armed Forces appears more majestically and boldly to the public's eye. Under the Communist Party's leadership, the Soviet people and servicemen made a decisive contribution to the world-wide, historical victory over fascism--the main attack force of world imperialism.

In crushing the aggressor, the Soviet Armed Forces not only defended their socialist homeland's honor and freedom but also accomplished a great liberation mission of delivering the European and Asian nations from the fascist yoke and from Japanese military domination. That a dark, sinister night of fascism did not descend over the world is primarily due to the Soviet Armed Forces' brilliant victories and the Soviet people's heroism, courage and sacrifices at the front lines and on the home front. "The Soviet nation's great feat during World War II, the exploits of millions of known and unknown heroes who broke fascism's back and brought freedom to the people of many countries," emphasized Comrade L. I. Brezhnev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and Chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium, "will never be erased from mankind's grateful memory."<sup>1</sup>

The liberation mission of the Soviet Armed Forces is not a random event; it proceeds according to consistent rules.

From the very first days of its existence, the Soviet Army has developed as an army for defending the revolution's achievements and as an army of friendship and brotherhood among nations. It was organized and led by the Communist Party and its ideological standard has been Marxism-Leninism--an international doctrine since it articulates the fundamental class interests

of all workers without any distinction as to race or nationality. Therefore, from their establishment to the present, the Soviet Armed Forces have been a realistic personification of Lenin's brilliant ideas on unifying the people to defend the great socialist achievements and his ideas on the international nature of a new society. Our personnel have been and are being indoctrinated in a spirit of proletarian internationalism and in a spirit of true class brotherhood for workers of all nationalities.

Even while addressing the fighting men and commanders of the young Red Army during the Civil War, V. I. Lenin said: "You have the great honor of defending our sacred ideas with your weapons and...of actually implementing the international brotherhood of nations."<sup>2</sup> This commandment of Lenin's has always been a guiding star for Soviet servicemen during all phases of the struggle against imperialist aggressors. They proved their loyalty to their international duty in the prewar years on numerous occasions: they fought on the Republican side in Spain and defended the fraternal Mongolian people from the aggression of Japanese militarism. But, the most vivid expression of Lenin's policy of proletarian internationalism and the brotherhood of nations was the great liberation mission of the Armed Forces during World War II. In assessing this mission, we can justifiably repeat V. I. Lenin's words: "We did not betray anybody or anything; we did not sanction or cover up a single lie; we did not refuse to assist a single, unfortunate friend or comrade in every way we could and with everything at our disposal."<sup>3</sup>

With the USSR's entry into World War II, it became the primary bulwark for all the nations' fight against fascism. The Soviet-German Front, which was the primary front throughout the entire war, attracted the attention of millions of people who were worn down by their fascist bondage and the Soviet people's heroic fight against Hitler's attacking hordes sowed hope and faith in victory in the hearts of Resistance fighters by attracting hundreds and thousands of new fighters into their ranks. The entire world knew that the outcome of the fighting on the Soviet-German Front would determine the fate of world civilization and the freedom and independence of numerous nations and governments.

When the homeland of Great October was threatened by mortal danger at the very beginning of the Great Patriotic War, the Communist Party and the Soviet government announced in the 29 June All-Russian Communist Party (Bol'shevik) Central Committee and USSR Council of People's Commissars directive that the goal of the National Patriotic War against the fascist oppressors was to not only eliminate the threat hanging over our country but also to assist all the European nations which were suffering under the yoke of German fascism. The just goals of the Great Patriotic War, goals which stemmed from the nature of the war and which were formulated by the Communist Party, were an outstanding example of proletarian internationalism and a shining example of a dialectical solution to the Soviet government's basic problems in defending the socialist homeland and the interests of progressive mankind.

In spite of the difficult military situation, the USSR provided the utmost in assistance to the subjugated countries in establishing and arming

national military formations (Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania and others) and supported the Resistance fighters politically and materially. But, nevertheless, the decisive condition for the accomplishment of their international duty by the Soviet Union and its Armed Forces was the destruction of the military power of Hitler's Wehrmacht. Because of this, the purely military aspect of the liberation mission became the primary factor which would guarantee the achievement of the war's ultimate goal. After all, it was only total defeat of the aggressor that would bring complete freedom and independence to the people of the occupied countries. And, while victoriously advancing to the west, the Soviet Army immediately began to implement its historic mission. Behind them were severe years of fighting, difficult, front-line marches and engagements and battles covered with the glory of victory. It was on the battlefields near Moscow that the myth developed by Nazi propaganda on the fascist army's "invincibility" was shattered before the entire world and it was here that Hitler's strategic concept of "blitzkrieg warfare" failed.

The crushing blows which our forces delivered to the enemy in the battles for Stalingrad, at the Kursk Salient, in the Northern Caucasus and for the Dnepr provided the crowning touch to the radical turning point in the Great Patriotic War. The strategic initiative had solidly and completely shifted to the Soviet Army which entered the final stage of the war as a mighty, formidable power, as a vivid personification of the socialist nation's strength and as the army of liberation for the enslaved people and countries.

A characteristic feature of the Soviet Supreme High Command's plan for the 1944 Summer-Fall campaign and the 1944-45 Winter campaign was that the important political goal of providing immediate assistance to the people of Europe for their liberation from the fascist yoke took first place along with the military goal of winding up the total defeat of fascist Germany. This political goal was of historical importance. Soviet servicemen perceived it as their international commitment. Nobody vacillated on whether it was necessary to go to the assistance of the people of Poland, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Norway and other nations. Every Soviet serviceman, from soldier to marshal, considered it his direct duty to rid mankind of the fascist plague and to extend a fraternal, helping hand to the subjugated and oppressed.

While completing the rout of fascist German forces on the Right Bank of the Ukraine on the night of 27 March 1944, the 2nd Ukrainian Front made a forced crossing of the Prut and entered Romania. The men of the front were extremely glad and especially proud that they had the high honor of being the first to undertake the liberation mission. These feelings boosted their strength and summoned them to a heroic feat on behalf of their humane goal. Commanders, political agencies, party and Komsomol activists continued to maintain this burst of inspiration by explaining the Soviet government's 2 April 1944 statement to the men; this statement set forth the Soviet Army's liberation goals. It specifically pointed out that the Soviet government "is not pursuing a goal of acquiring any part of Romania or of changing the current Romanian social system and that the Soviet forces entry into Romania is



exclusively dictated by military necessity and by continued resistance from enemy forces." <sup>4</sup> Meanwhile, on 14 April 1944, the Front War Council addressed an appeal to the people liberated from the fascist German oppression by the Soviet Army; the appeal emphasized that "the Red Army only has one goal--to deliver a final defeat to the German armies and to destroy Hitler Germany's domination of the countries it enslaved, including your country. It is not as a conqueror but as the Romanian people's liberator from fascist German oppression that the Red Army has entered Romania."

Along with the Soviet Army, a Romanian force of 138,000 men, which was operationally part of the 2nd Ukrainian Front, fought for their homeland's freedom.

The nobility of the liberators, their truly fraternal participation in the local residents' fate and their unselfish assistance stimulated the Romanian workers' gratitude toward the servicemen of the world's first socialist nation. In combat with the fascist German invaders on Romanian territory, 69,000 Soviet soldiers laid down their lives.

In July 1944, the liberation of Poland was underway. The 1st Ukrainian Front was the first to begin combat operations in the southern part of the country by conducting the L'vov-Sandomierz Operation; later, the 1st Belorussian Front, which included the Polish Forces 1st Army, entered Poland.

The Polish people were one of the first European victims of fascist aggression. After taking the country, Hitler's forces deprived it of its national and governmental independence and divided it into two parts. The most economically developed areas (Poznan, Pomorze, Upper Silesia, Lodz and others) were included in Germany and the residents were evacuated to the remaining territory which was turned into a "governor-generalship" headed by the butcher Frank. He was the one that predicted the Polish nation's fate with Nazi impudence: "From now on, the Polish nation's political role is at an end. It is being proclaimed a work force, nothing more....We will try to erase the very concept of Poland forever." <sup>5</sup>

The Polish people did not reconcile themselves to subjugation. They continued to fight. Many of their best representatives died in this unequal fight to the death; thousands upon thousands were victims of the fascist "New Order." So, their liberation from the horror and gloom of fascism was all the more joyful for the citizens of Poland.

In their battles for Poland's freedom, Soviet servicemen demonstrated unparalleled courage and large-scale heroism. They gave their lives while sacredly and rigorously carrying out their international duty. In the bloody engagements on ancient Polish territory, approximately 600,000 Soviet soldiers and officers died for a fraternal nation's successful future. The Polish United Workers Party Central Committee Politburo decree on the 30th anniversary of the victory over fascism emphasized: "The Polish people and all their future generations will always remember the Soviet Union's

historical role in liberating our homeland and they will eternally remember the people who gave their lives to bring us freedom." <sup>6</sup>

As the Soviet Army approached the borders of the occupied nations, the workers stepped up the fight for their liberation. In several countries, this fight erupted into open uprisings against Hitler's forces. Under these conditions, the assistance from Soviet servicemen was especially apropos. This is how it was in Romania, Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria. While stirring up the people for open, armed conflict, the communist parties explained the just nature of the war with fascism and instilled confidence in the people that the Soviet Armed Forces would help them get rid of their oppression and subjugation.

The proximity of our forces to the borders of Yugoslavia inspired the people to expand their fight against the fascists. The People's Liberation Army's Headquarters directed a request to the Soviet government for the Soviet Army to enter the country. The People's Liberation Army's fighting men and Yugoslavia's workers, who were waging a fierce fight with the forces of occupation, were impatiently awaiting this moment. Then, the Yugoslav People's Liberation Army (YPLA) Supreme Commander in Chief's 7 September order indicated that this day had finally arrived, the day which Yugoslav servicemen had been waiting for for three and one half years of hard fighting; the Soviet Army had arrived at Yugoslavia's border to help its people clear the hated fascist hordes out of their homeland.<sup>7</sup> At the end of September, the 3rd Ukrainian Front crossed the Yugoslav border.

In its offensive battles and in close coordination with the fraternal armies of Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, the Soviet Army drove Hitler's invaders out of Eastern Serbia and liberated Yugoslavia's capital.

The battles to liberate Belgrade were exceptionally stubborn ones. The fighting men of the YPLA and Soviet soldiers fought shoulder to shoulder here, displaying valor and heroism in the fight against a common enemy. In addition, the Soviet Command took a number of steps to avert the destruction of this ancient city and to preserve its historical and cultural treasures. Specifically, restrictions were put on the employment of heavy artillery in street fighting and liberated buildings and blocks were immediately cleared of mines by Soviet combat engineers. At the disposal of the special city mine-clearing headquarters were seven combat engineer battalions whose personnel disarmed 3,179 mines and 3,540 explosive charges with a total weight of approximately 29 tons and they cleared seven ammunition dumps of mines.<sup>8</sup>

These steps, as well as the courage and selflessness of our combat engineers, saved the lives of many of the city's residents. "The liberation of Belgrade," emphasized Marshal Iosip Broz Tito in his 20 October 1944 message to I.V. Stalin, "is of historical importance to our nations....It firmly re-emphasizes that the Yugoslav and Soviet people are blood brothers."<sup>9</sup>

Throughout the entire fight with the fascist German invaders, the Soviet Union provided the courageous Yugoslav people with all-round assistance. Just during the final stage of the war when the YPLA leadership requested

assistance from the Soviet government in supplying its formations with modern weapons, the National Defense Committee decree of 10 February 1945 gave Yugoslavia 89,913 rifles and carbines, 38,800 automatic weapons, 6,368 light and medium machineguns, 2,164 artillery pieces and mortars, 130 tanks, 386 aircraft, 2,578 vehicles as well as other military equipment.<sup>10</sup> Ravaged by the war, plundered by the Nazis and doomed to starvation, the Yugoslav people received provisions from the fraternal Soviet people in November-December 1944. On this occasion, Iosip Broz Tito stated in an interview with a Reuters correspondent: "Thanks to the Soviet government and the efforts of Red Army officers, they were able at great risk to deliver 50,000 tons of grain to Yugoslavia. Of this grain, 17,000 tons were delivered to Belgrade. This amount will provide bread for the city's residents for more than 5-6 months...."<sup>11</sup>

Will the Yugoslav people be able to forget the people who liberated them from fascist slavery and the people who saved them from starvation and poverty? No. Never. As the Yugoslav newspaper GLAS wrote in 1944: "We are greatly, enormously indebted to the Red Army. We are endlessly devoted to it and to the entire Soviet Union."<sup>12</sup>

The end of September 1944 marked the beginning of the Soviet forces combat operations in Hungary. They continued until 4 April 1945. During this time, the Soviet Army conducted major operations, such as Debrecen, Budapest and Balaton operations and part of the Vienna Operation. As a result, fascist Germany lost its last ally in Europe. Protracted, bloody fighting was required for Hungary's withdrawal from the war. This was not simply accounted for by the concentration of major forces of Hitler's army here, but also by the domestic political situation. Terror was raging within the country. Hitler's and Horthy's propaganda was intimidating the people with the "horrors of bol'shevism." Slandorous lies were being spread about Soviet soldiers.

In this difficult environment, the Soviet Army's fighting men and commanders had to have an exceptionally high understanding of their international duty and of the policies of the Communist Party and the Soviet government, and they had to be able to distinguish friend from foe. The 2nd Ukrainian Front War Council's statement to the men directly stated: "Do not confuse the working people, who have been doubly enslaved by German and Hungarian fascism, with the criminal Hungarian government."

In giving a high rating to the heroic feat of the Soviet Armed Forces during World War II and to the importance of their victory over fascism for the Hungarian people's fate, Comrade Janos Kadar, first secretary of the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party (HSWP) Central Committee, stated at the 11th HSWP Congress: "The Hungarian people will never forget the sacrifices borne by the Soviet people during World War II in the mortal engagement with Hitler's fascism; as a result of this engagement, they drove Hitler's invaders out of Hungary and liberated our people."<sup>13</sup>



Upon completing the operations to liberate Hungary, the 2nd and 3rd Ukrainian Fronts entered Austria and, on 13 April, Soviet forces were in complete control of Vienna, the country's capital. The Soviet servicemen's swift, selfless actions kept Hitler's forces from destroying one of Europe's most beautiful cities.

There was a protracted, stubborn and intense battle with the fascist German invaders in Czechoslovakia. In September 1944 the 1st and 4th Ukrainian Fronts and the Czechoslovak I Army Corps began an offensive to assist Slovak patriots who had started an armed uprising against Hitler's forces. The Soviet forces aggressive, offensive operations provided a great deal of assistance to the insurgents. In the winter of 1945 the 2nd and 4th Ukrainian Fronts carried out a joint operation, surmounted the Western Carpathian Mountains and broke out at the Maravska-Ostrava industrial region. Soviet forces developed the final operations to liberate Czechoslovakia in the Spring of 1945. During March-April they conducted the Maravska-Ostrava and Bratislava-Brno Operations and in May they conducted the Prague Operation. On 11 May the entire country was completely liberated. The Czechoslovak people's age-old struggle for their freedom and independence was crowned with success.

The capture of the capital of the "thousand-year Reich" and the total capitulation of fascist Germany ended the war in Europe. The fascist system, reared by imperialist monopolies, was overthrown. It caused a lot of distress and suffering for the people, including the German people. Now, freed of their Nazi fetters, the German people have become the masters of their own fate. The Soviet Armed Forces liberation mission was a major prerequisite for the establishment and evolution of the first socialist nation on German territory--the German Democratic Republic.

The war in Europe had ended but the war in Asia continued; true to its duty as an Ally, the Soviet Union undertook combat operations against militaristic Japan. Again, the Soviet Union set a political goal for this war of "bringing peace closer and freeing people from further sacrifices and suffering..."<sup>14</sup>

The Soviet Armed Forces swift advance in the Far East where they were fighting shoulder to shoulder with Mongolian forces, the splitting attacks and the encirclement of the Japanese Kwantung Army established a favorable environment for the development of combat operations by the Chinese people's liberation forces. Furthermore, the Soviet Fronts' advance, and especially the Transbaikalian Front's advance, was very timely since the situation of the Chinese 8th People's Liberation Army in Manchuria was extremely serious prior to the advance and it was threatened with destruction. "...The Red Army saved us from destruction and we are especially grateful to it," General Zhao Wenjin, a direct participant in these events, wrote later.

Our servicemen marched through Chinese territory proud of the mission which had befallen them. Using the experience gained in the war against Hitler's Germany, the command elements, political agencies and party organizations carried out propaganda operations among the local population. In a statement

to the people, the Soviet Command wrote: "The Red Army, the army of the great Soviet people, is coming to the assistance of our Ally, China, and the friendly Chinese people. Here in the East, it is raising its combat standards as the army of liberation from Japanese oppression and slavery for the people of China, Manchuria and Korea...."

By the end of August 1945, all of Northeastern China and North Korea were completely liberated from the Japanese invaders. The Chinese and Korean people, who had borne the entire burden of foreign occupation on their shoulders, expressed their boundless feelings of gratitude to their liberators. In the liberated cities and villages, there were spontaneous meetings and gatherings of residents who welcomed the Soviet Army's fighting men and commanders.

As in the liberated countries of Europe, the Soviet government and the Soviet Command helped the local authorities in China and Korea establish a normal life for the people and they made arrangements to supply the workers with food, medicine and materiel. Thus, for example, one-time unemployment benefits were paid to 70,000 unemployed people in the city of Dairen and the majority of elementary and secondary schools were opened.

The Chinese people will never forget the people who saved them from Japanese slavery and from the poverty and destruction which the occupying forces inflicted on the country.

Unfortunately, after consigning these facts to oblivion, the current Beijing leadership is trying to conceal the Soviet Armed Forces great liberation mission which brought freedom to millions of Chinese citizens. With its hegemonistic, anti-Soviet policy which is closely merged with the imperialist nations' policies, it is smearing the Soviet people and their army and falsifying historical truth. But, the historical truth cannot be concealed. It lives in the heart of the people, in the hearts of those people from Mudanjiang Province, who said in August 1945: "We are expressing our fervent gratitude to the Russian people and to the Red Army for liberating us from the oppression of the Chinese people's sworn enemies, the Japanese thugs....", in the hearts of the residents of Chifin who wrote: "...we are very glad to welcome our friend--the Soviet Union's Red Army--to the city of Chifin...." and in the grateful memories of the people who remember the Soviet liberators.

Recently, the Beijing leadership and the U.S. imperialists have increased their malicious anti-Soviet propaganda because of the events in Afghanistan. The "position of honor" in their propaganda arsenal is occupied by lies and slander, distorted facts and open provocations. By using anti-Soviet propaganda, the Maoists are trying to distract the attention of world public opinion, and primarily their own people's public opinion, from their disgraceful deal with the Pentagon, with the militaristic forces of imperialism and reaction against the national liberation movement in Afghanistan, Iran and other countries.

While debating with phrases on peace and while hiding the treacherous goals of Maoist hegemonism and great power chauvinism under this cloak, the Beijing

leadership set out on the path of aggression against the Socialist Republic of Vietnam itself, having forgotten too soon what the Chinese people suffered under the Japanese occupation.

The people of the world are closely following the intrigues of both the imperialist and Maoist politicians. They see their support in the Soviet Union's firm foreign policy. "This policy combines a persistent, peaceful nature with a firm rejection of aggression. It has proven itself in recent decades and we will continue to follow it. Nobody will deflect us from this course," emphasized Comrade L. I. Brezhnev in his answer to questions from a PRAVDA correspondent.<sup>15</sup>

The Soviet Armed Forces liberation mission is based on Lenin's principles of proletarian internationalism. It is a vivid enunciation of the policies of the CPSU and the Soviet government, policies which are aimed at support for the people's liberation struggle.

While carrying out their liberation mission during World War II, the Soviet Armed Forces conducted combat operations for more than a year outside our homeland. Over 7,000,000 Soviet servicemen took part in these operations. About 1.5 million Soviet soldiers and commanders participated in the Far East military operations. The operations to liberate the European and Asian countries were undertaken by 11 Front formations, 2 Air Defense Fronts, 4 fleets, 50 combined arms armies, 6 tank armies, 13 air armies, 3 Air Defense armies, and 3 flotillas. Altogether, during the war, the Soviet Armed Forces liberated, either completely or partially, 13 European and Asian nations with a population of approximately 200,000,000 people from the fascist German and Japanese invaders.<sup>16</sup>

Meanwhile, in falsifying the history of World War II, bourgeois ideologists are trying to discredit the Soviet Armed Forces liberation mission in every way possible. In distorting reality, the modern fabricators are spreading a version of "exporting revolution" from the USSR to Central and Southeastern European countries and of the imposition of a "Soviet regime" on them.

These fabrications do not have anything in common with the truth and they are a fundamental contradiction of the Marxist-Leninist interpretation of the laws of social revolution. V. I. Lenin wrote in this respect: "Revolutions are not made to order; they are not timed to coincide with a particular moment but mature during historical evolution and break out at a time which is dependent upon a number of internal and external causes."<sup>17</sup> The fundamental, revolutionary changes in the countries liberated from the occupying forces were caused by the entire course of their internal evolution. The Soviet Union's total defeat of fascist Germany and militaristic Japan established a favorable environment for the victory of national democratic revolutions. The presence of Soviet Forces in the countries they liberated guaranteed the freedom of selecting their path of development to the masses and this presence held down domestic reactionary forces and precluded the possibility of intervention by imperialist forces.

The Soviet policy of not interfering in the internal affairs of other countries, of not interfering in their political and economic system, was the rule for our forces. While accomplishing the sacred mission of liberators, Soviet servicemen displayed superior moral traits and were the bearers of socialist ideology. The fabrications of the bourgeois and revisionistic falsifiers—who are trying to blacken the bright image of the liberator and who are contemptuous of the memory of hundreds of thousands of Soviet people who gave their lives for the cause of liberating nations from the fascist yoke and for the great principles of proletarian internationalism—are nothing more than blasphemy. As emphasized by Comrade L. I. Brezhnev, general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium, "nobody has been nor will they be permitted to forget that the people of our era are greatly indebted for their very existence and their freedom to the heroic Soviet people, the Soviet state and the great socialist system!"<sup>18</sup>

The victory over German fascism and Japanese militarism had a profound influence on mankind's subsequent development and it radically changed the course of history. The primary results of this victory were: a change in the balance of power in favor of socialism and the transformation of it into a world-wide system, an increase in the international prestige of the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries and in their influence on the fate of many of the world's nations in their struggle for national liberation. With the unbridled anti-Soviet campaign, the war psychosis and feverish arms race which reactionary imperialist forces and the Maoists who are closely collaborating with them have recently unleashed, "people have begun to have a better understanding of the imperialists' game and they know who their friends are and who their foes are."<sup>19</sup>

The Soviet Armed Forces great liberation mission has evoked and continues to evoke profound gratitude and appreciation from the world's people. Majestic memorials now tower up in the places where the Soviet soldier fought and the fraternal graves of those who fell in the severe fighting are ablaze with flowers. From the gray cliffs of Northern Norway to the mountains in the South, these monuments stand as a symbol of the liberator's international feat. The people's path to these monuments will never be overgrown because this feat will burn eternally in the hearts of people of all generations.

#### FOOTNOTES

1. L. I. Brezhnev. "Leninskiy Kurs" (Following Lenin's Policy), vol 3, Moscow, Politizdat, 1972, p 6.
2. V. I. Lenin. "Poln. sobr. soch." (Complete Collected Works), vol 37, p 26.
3. Ibid., vol 36, p 80.



4. "Vneshnyaya politika Sovetskogo Soyuz v period Otechestvennoy voyny" (The Soviet Union's Foreign Policy During the Patriotic War), vol II, Moscow, Gospolitizdat, 1946, p 105.
5. "Istoriya Pol'shi" (History of Poland), vol III, Izd-vo Akademii nauk SSSR, 1958, p 531.
6. "Velikaya pobeda Sovetskogo naroda 1941-1945" (The Soviet People's Great Victory: 1941-1945), Moscow, "Nauka", 1978, p 525.
7. "Istoriya Yugoslavii," vol II, Moscow, Izd-vo Akademii nauk SSSR, 1963, p 238.
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9. "Vneshnyaya politika Sovetskogo Soyuz v period Otechestvennoy voyny," vol II, p 359.
10. "Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy voyny 1939-1945," vol 10, Voenizdat, 1979, p 214.
11. "Osvoboditel'naya missiya Sovetskikh Vooruzhennykh Sil vo vtoroy mirovoy voyne." (The Soviet Armed Forces Liberation Mission in World War II), Moscow, Politizdat, 1971, p 237.
12. "Voin-osvoboditel'" (Soldier-Liberator), Voenizdat, 1970, p 200.
13. PRAVDA, 18 March 1975.
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15. PRAVDA, 13 January 1980
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17. V. I. Lenin. "Poln. sobr. soch.," vol 36, p 531.
18. L. I. Brezhnev. "Leninskim Kursom," vol 4, 1974, p 196.
19. L. I. Brezhnev. "Speech at a Meeting with the Voters of Moscow's Bauman District," PRAVDA, 23 February 1980.

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## SOURCES OF VICTORY IN THE GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 5, May 80 signed to press  
22 Apr 80 pp 12-19

[Article by Merited Scientist of the RSFSR, Professor and Doctor of Historical Sciences, MajGen (Ret) B. Tel'pukhovskiy: "Sources of the Soviet Union's Victory in the Great Patriotic War"]

[Text] The Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945 ended in a total and decisive victory for the Soviet socialist state and its Armed Forces. The total defeat of fascist Germany and militaristic Japan put an end to World War II.

The Soviet people and their Armed Forces selflessly defended their homeland's integrity and national independence, destroyed the two major centers of fascism and world aggression and disrupted the predatory plans of German and Japanese imperialism which had attempted to gain world domination and to enslave other countries. The decisive role in the fascist bloc's total defeat was played by the Soviet Union whose Armed Forces bore the primary burden of the fighting.

The bourgeois fabricators of history are denying in every way possible the legitimate nature of the USSR's victory over fascist Germany and imperialist Japan; they are attempting to explain the latter's defeat with various secondary factors which were insignificant to the war's outcome. Thus, there is a widespread allegation that the fascist German army suffered defeat to a considerable extent due to the enormous expanses of the USSR, the severe climate, Germany's insufficient preparations for the war, the treason of general officers, a low level of patriotism among the people, the anti-fascist movement against Hitler's regime, Hitler's blunders and mistakes after he took over leadership of the war, etc. Such explanations by the apologists of imperialism attempt to prove that by considering the special features of the Russian Theater of Operations, the new forms and methods of armed conflict and more skillful leadership of the war, the war against the USSR could have had a different outcome, one more desirable for the aggressors.



Furthermore, imperialist propaganda is persistently silent about the true reasons for the defeat of fascist Germany and militaristic Japan in their confrontation with the USSR. This is intentional since discussing them and agreeing that the Soviet people's victory over imperialism's strike force was legitimate is a confirmation of the socialist system's superiority over the capitalist system and is an acknowledgment of the lack of historical prospects for the pretensions of militant reactionary forces in gaining world domination.

V. I. Lenin indicated that "any war is inseparably linked to the political system from which it originates,"<sup>1</sup> and, consequently, the success of the war will be greatly dependent "upon the internal system of the country which engages in war...."<sup>2</sup>

The main sources of the Soviet Union's victory in the Great Patriotic War were: its societal and governmental system, its political, economic and military organization, its ideological unity, socialist patriotism, the indestructible friendship among the people of the USSR, proletarian internationalism and the unparalleled heroism of the Soviet people and their fighting men and the Communist Party's managerial, inspirational and leadership activities.

The Soviet societal and governmental system made it possible for our country to eliminate the czarist heritage of economic and cultural backwardness within a very brief period of history, to develop the physical plant for socialism and to carry out a cultural revolution. The young worker-peasant state evolved according to Lenin's brilliant plans. While delivering the Central Committee Report at the Ninth Party Congress in the spring of 1920, Vladimir Il'ich set the goals for economic development; the basis of this development was to be the country's electrification. Under V. I. Lenin's leadership, the plan for the National Commission for Russia's Electrification was drawn up with a 10-15 year estimate. It was our homeland's first long-range, national economic development plan. Vladimir Il'ich called it the party's second program. During the first five-year plans, the Soviet Union was transformed into a highly developed industrial power with a modern army and navy by the efforts of the party and the people. This was enormously significant in increasing the Soviet Union's defensive power.

The fascist German hordes perfidious attack on the USSR forced the Soviet people to stop their peaceful, constructive work and take up arms to properly repel the aggressor. On 29 June 1941, the USSR Council of People's Commissars (CPC) and the All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik) (AUCP) Central Committee issued a directive which contained the plan for putting the entire country on a war footing. The party and government demanded a change in the nature and work style of party, governmental and public organizations pursuant to a wartime environment. The state of emergency made it necessary to form a national political authority which would be able to unite the efforts of the front lines and home front, make decisions quickly and implement them. On 30 June 1941, the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium, the AUCP Central Committee

and the CPC decreed the establishment of a National Defense Committee (NDC). It included the most prominent statesmen and military men. The NDC was headed by I. V. Stalin, general secretary of the Party Central Committee and chairman of the USSR CPC.

This emergency authority exercised management of the country through standing party and governmental agencies and public organizations. All authority was concentrated in its hands. The NDC made decisions and adopted decrees which were valid, wartime laws. Civilians, party, Soviet, Komsomol and military authorities had to implement them without question.

The NDC managed the country in close coordination with other high-level national authorities. The basic idea of the arrangements made at the beginning of the war was to subordinate all sectors of the national economy to meeting the country's war needs within the shortest possible time. To manage the defense industries more efficiently and skillfully, people's commissariats, which were in charge of tank and mortar production, were formed. Within the Gosplan, departments were established for weapons, ammunitions, shipbuilding, aircraft building, and tank building. They planned the output of military hardware and weapons for all enterprises regardless of their departmental chain of command.<sup>3</sup>

On 16 August, the 4th Quarter 1941 and 1942 national economic plan was approved for the Volga Region, the Urals, Western Siberia, Kazakhstan and Central Asia. It made provisions for transferring industry from threatened areas to the East. Within an unprecedented short period of time and under extremely difficult conditions, over 1,360 enterprises and more than 10 million people were relocated to the Eastern areas.<sup>4</sup> Such a move of industrial strength was unprecedented in history. Moreover, the evacuated plant frequently had to be located in completely barren locations, set up and put into operation. The fact that this process was completely successful was due to the heroism of the workers on the home front and to the farsighted economic policies of the Communist Party and the Soviet government in constructing duplicate machinebuilding, petroleum processing, and chemical industry enterprises in the Urals, Siberia and the Volga area during the first five-year plans. Therefore, in many cases, the evacuated plants and factories were combined with already operational ones. For example, Lenin-grad's Kirov Diesel Plant and the Khar'kov Diesel Plant were merged with the Cheliabinsk Tractor Plant to form the USSR's largest high capacity tank building enterprise. By the end of 1942, the Soviet government was able to restore and put into operation over 1,300 industrial enterprises evacuated to the East.

The Soviet socialist government's primary activities during the war were: defending the fatherland, developing and strengthening the Armed Forces, managing the workers' initiatives and consolidating the USSR's international position. The country was transformed into a single military camp. In all their activities during the war, as in peacetime, the party and government relied on the masses and the local Councils of Workers' Deputies as well as on the widespread network of public organizations and voluntary associations.

Millions of patriots actively carried out the Soviet government's military arrangements. The advantages of the Soviet societal system as a decisive source of and moving force in the national fight against the fascist German invaders were demonstrated in the partisan movement, which was a very vivid expression of Soviet patriotism, and in the determination of the people in the USSR's occupied areas, in the unbending strength of their morale which opposed the intrigues of the occupying forces. Even under the occupation, our societal and governmental system demonstrated its vitality and durability. In the partisan areas behind the front lines, people continued to live according to Soviet laws.

The past war vividly confirmed the Marxist-Leninist proposition that the belligerents' economic systems cannot be evaluated by simply making a mathematical comparison of quantitative indicators. It is not just the resources themselves that are important but also a nation's ability to make them effective, to quickly mobilize its physical resources and make proper use of them for war needs. The latter depends upon the society's economic and political organization.

During 1941-1945, the socialist economic system was opposed by a powerful capitalist one--the economic system of Germany and its partners in aggression as well as the economic system of the countries it occupied. However, in spite of its superiority in the basic types of industrial output and its high level of industrial readiness to wage a large war, Germany failed militarily and economically in its single combat with the Soviet Union. Our economic system was more mobile and vigorous. The stringent, planned nature of our system made it possible to make maximum use of all the country's resources to attain victory. With several times fewer machine tools, less metal, coal and electrical power, the Soviet Union manufactured a great deal more military equipment during the war than fascist Germany did. For example, during the war, the USSR manufactured 137,000 aircraft, 104,000 tanks and self-propelled guns and 488,000 artillery pieces<sup>5</sup> while, during the same period of time, Germany produced 78,900 combat aircraft, 53,800 tanks and self-propelled guns and 44,800 field artillery pieces (75-mm and above).<sup>6</sup>

With the extremely serious, temporary loss of part of our country's territory, the village kolkhoz workers honorably carried out their patriotic duty and provided the army and the cities with provisions and provided industry with agricultural raw materials. During 1941-1944, the government purchased 4,312 million poods of grain while, during World War I in pre-revolutionary Russia, a total of 1,399 million poods of grain were produced and purchased.<sup>7</sup>

The socialist economic system honorably withstood the severe trials.

Another important source of our victory in the Great Patriotic War was the powerful, driving force of Soviet society, such as its ideological unity, socialist patriotism, the friendship among the people of the USSR, proletarian internationalism and the unparalleled heroism of the Soviet people and their servicemen.

Within the Soviet Union, the interests of the working class, the farmers and the working intelligentsia were the same. The indestructable friendship of all the nations inhabiting our immense homeland is grounded on a firm foundation of Marxism-Leninism and Lenin's nationality policy. The material basis for this friendship is public ownership of the means of production.

V. I. Lenin taught us: "By organizing production without class oppression and by guaranteeing the well being of all members of the nation, socialism thereby gives full range to the people's 'community of interest' and this is precisely what facilitates and greatly accelerates the rapprochement and merger of national groups."

Things were different in the fascist state. The offspring of monopoly capital, it was a tool for oppressing the masses. It was a terroristic dictatorship of the most reactionary circles of German imperialism which was trying to dominate the world and enslave people. The ruling cliques did not have and could not have had any progressive ideas which would completely unite the nation and the people. After poisoning the consciousness of millions of their fellow countrymen with vile chauvinistic, racist and anti-communist ideas, Hitler's men drew Germany into a bloody slaughter on behalf of the monopolies. But, the Soviet people were fighting for a just cause and for a bright future for all mankind. Our people's love for their homeland and devotion to socialism, their profound patriotism and internationalism, the moral unity of the USSR's entire population, and unshakable confidence in our victory and a fervent desire to totally defeat a hated enemy--all of these superior moral traits of USSR citizens were an invincible barrier to a strong and experienced enemy. The just, lofty ideas and goals for which our people and their Armed Forces fought were a great deal stronger in their effect on the masses than were the unjust, base goals and ideas of German fascism.

The USSR's victory in the war reconfirmed the truth of the Marxist-Leninist proposition that the army's fighting strength and its ability to defeat the enemy are directly dependent upon the social system and economic potential upon which this strength lies and they are dependent upon the socio-political nature of the war and the people's attitude toward it. The armed confrontation with the capitalist world's strongest and most experienced army vividly demonstrated the superiority of the Soviet military organization and the Soviet art of war. Due to the tireless concern of the party and government, our army and navy met modern standards by the beginning of the Great Patriotic War. The theoretical ideological foundation for the army and navy and a major source for their structure and training were the Soviet art of war's methodological propositions developed by V. I. Lenin.

In the prewar years, Soviet military science was proceeding along the proper path in developing a theory for the art of war and it had achieved significant results. This facilitated our Armed Forces brilliant execution of more than 50 operations by groups of fronts, approximately 250 front operations and over 1,000 army operations during the war.<sup>9</sup> An especially high degree of Soviet strategy was shown in the battles for Moscow, Stalingrad and the Kursk Salient, in the operations on the Right Bank of the Ukraine and in Belorussia and in the Yassko-Kishinev, Vistula-Oder, Berlin and Manchurian operations.



A significant contribution to the development of large unit tactics was made by numerous front and army operations which were brilliantly conceived and executed. Soviet generals and officers creatively accomplished their assigned missions while enriching their combat experience and developing new forms and methods of armed conflict with the enemy.

The party and government also successfully solved the very difficult problem of training regular military personnel. During the period of force development, and especially during the war, they established a broad network of military educational institutions which, during the fighting with fascist Germany and militaristic Japan alone, graduated approximately 2,000,000 commanders, political officers and various types of specialists. From the ranks of these graduates, a galaxy of remarkable military commanders developed, commanders who demonstrated superior skill in commanding army and avy forces.

Marshal of the Soviet Union A. M. Vasilevskiy wrote in his memoirs: "The Soviet Union's victory in the Great Patriotic War demonstrated that the socialist nation's military organization, like the entire socialist system, was more accomplished and more powerful than the fascist nation's military organization. The victory over Hitler's army signified the superiority of Soviet science and the Soviet art of war over bourgeois military science and the bourgeois art of war. Soviet strategy was realistic; it was based on an in-depth, correct understanding of the political situation and of the overall conditions for waging armed conflict." 10

The inspiration for and organizer of the Soviet people's victory over Hitler's Germany and imperialist Japan was the Communist Party. At the front lines and on the home front, in the territory occupied by the enemy and everywhere, it appeared as a single, mobilizing fighting force.

The party honorably carried out its duty to the people because it was guided in its activities by Marxist-Leninist doctrine and it conducted a policy of national defense for the Soviet homeland. This policy was based on making comprehensive use of socialism's historical advantages over capitalism in a wartime environment. It controlled the activities of all the elements which determined a victorious outcome in the fight with the fascist German invaders.

By creatively using V. I. Lenin's doctrine on defending the socialist homeland and Marxist-Leninist methods to analyze physical and spiritual resources and the balance of power in the world arena, the Central Committee, as the party's operational headquarters, developed a truly scientific policy for the armed conflict against the fascist invasion. The implementation of this policy was of decisive importance in attaining victory over the enemy.

By the beginning of the war, the AUCP numbered approximately 4,000,000 communists in its ranks. It quickly went over to a war footing and insured a united effort by the home front and front lines while leading them to a total defeat of the fascist German invaders. The CPSU Central Committee displayed unshakable courage, superior managerial abilities and supreme

self sacrifice in overcoming the enormous problems caused by fascist Germany's perfidious attack and it directed all the efforts of the party and the people and all the country's resources to achieve victory. "...The Central Committee was the headquarters," emphasized L. I. Brezhnev, general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, "which exercised supreme political and strategic leadership of military operations. It was the party that organized and rallied tens of millions of people and directed their energy, their will and their efforts toward a single goal--victory." 11

The Communist Party had well-trained personnel at its disposal in government, business and military activities and well-trained scholars and specialists in all branches of science. By skillfully allocating its forces and by concentrating them in all sectors where victory was being forged, it became a militant fighting party. The AUCP set an example of scientific leadership of the front lines and home front and of skillful utilization of all the country's manpower, physical and spiritual resources; it guaranteed the development of a favorable foreign policy environment for achieving victory. During the years of severe trials, there was an immeasurable increase in the international prestige of the party, the party of internationalists.

The AUCP focused exclusive attention on the Armed Forces daily life and combat activities. Its influence embraced command elements, all personnel in troop units and all categories of servicemen in the Soviet Army and Navy. With unbending willpower and heroism, the communist and Komsomol members overcame the difficulties of life at the front lines and were in the vanguard of the fight with the enemy. They were seen by the men as the most steadfast, fearless and disciplined fighting men who did not spare any effort or life itself for the victory of our just cause.

By relying on the soviets, labor unions, the Komsomol and the workers' other public organizations, the party conducted goal-directed managerial and political activities at factories and plants, in transportation and at kolkhozes. "Everything for the front; everything for victory!" was the decisive factor on the home front.

The Communist Party led the Soviet people's fight in the occupied territory. The AUCP Central Committee continually led the party's underground and provided assistance to the partisan movement.

The years of our country's formidable trials were marked by an extraordinary increase in the masses political activity. The Soviet people--blue collar workers, kolkhoz workers, white collar workers and servicemen--demonstrated their close ties to the Communist Party and their profound faith in the correctness of its policies. During the war, over 5,000,000 candidate members and approximately 3.3 million members entered the party. 12 And, although over 3,000,000 communists died at the front lines, the party numbered almost 6,000,000 at the end of the war. 13



The severe war years completely confirmed V. I. Lenin's brilliant conclusion that when the workers unite as a single person, following the best people of their class, victory is guaranteed.

The total defeat of fascist Germany and imperialist Japan put an end to World War II. The Soviet Union's victory was of world-wide historical importance. It demonstrated the colossal strength of the socialist country and its people who rose up to defend their homeland's freedom and independence. It reconfirmed V. I. Lenin's immortal words: "Nobody will ever defeat a nation where the majority of the workers and peasants recognize, feel and see that they are fighting for their own Soviet power--the power of the workers--and that they are fighting for a cause whose victory will guarantee them and their children an opportunity to enjoy all the blessings of culture and all the creations of man's labor."<sup>14</sup>

The victory over Hitler's Germany and its allies graphically demonstrated the invincibility of the forces of socialism and progress and the impracticability of the plans of imperialist pretenders to world domination.

The Soviet people and their Armed Forces not only fought for their homeland's integrity and national independence and defended socialism's great achievements but also honorably fulfilled their liberation mission. Approximately 7,000,000 Soviet servicemen waged fierce combat with the enemy for more than a year in 13 European and Asian countries. Over one million of them lay down their lives to liberate the subjugated people. The Soviet Armed Forces also carried out their international duty to the Asian people subjugated by militaristic Japan. As a result of the Kwantung Army's total defeat and as a result of the powerful national liberation movement, the people of China, North Korea, Vietnam and other Asian countries, found their independence.

The Soviet soldier did not enter German territory as a conqueror or avenger but as a friend of Germany's workers. This fact was the primary reason that a significant part of the German people went over to the path of revolutionary democratic development and it was the primary reason for the subsequent formation of the German Democratic Republic--the forward bastion of peace and socialism in Central Europe.

The world-wide, historical importance of the USSR's victory consists of the fact that "the Soviet Union's decisive role in the total defeat of German fascism and Japanese militarism in World War II established a favorable environment for overthrowing the power of capitalists and land holders over the people in a number of European and Asian countries."<sup>15</sup>

The 35th anniversary of the USSR's victory over fascist Germany is being celebrated by the Soviet people with a special pride that the people of our multinational country showed the world marvels of endurance and courage while heroically fighting in a single formation and selflessly working for the defense of our socialist homeland and for total victory over the enemy. The results of the war convincingly demonstrated that there is no

force in the world which would be able to defeat socialism and force a nation to bow down which is loyal to the ideas of Marxism-Leninism, devoted to the socialist homeland and united around Lenin's party. These results are a formidable warning to the new pretenders to world domination who are fanning war psychosis today, increasing international tension and rattling their sabres. Militant imperialist circles, and primarily the U.S. imperialists, as Comrade L. I. Brezhnev stated in his 22 February 1980 campaign speech, do not like the strengthening of peace or the successes of the people's liberation struggle. The current U.S. leadership is conducting a policy of undermining detente and exacerbating the international situation. It is trying to dictate its wishes to the socialist nations and other nations. The NATO countries, headed by the U.S. and their assistant, Maoist China, are again trying to speak to the USSR and the other countries of the socialist community in the language of the "cold war" but, as is well known, imperialism already tried to test us at the dawn of Soviet power. Everybody knows how this ended. The fascist aggressors also were not able to break us in the bloodiest war mankind has lived through. They were the ones defeated, not us. The imperialists put the Soviet Union and our friends to the test during the "cold war period" but, nothing came of this either.

"The adventuristic 'doctrines' of the new apostles of a 'policy from a position of strength,' " said Comrade L. I. Brezhnev to the voters, "is dangerous not just for an individual country or group of countries. These doctrines threaten the peace and security of all nations and all people. Repelling these sinister plans is a job for everybody who wants and values peace." 15

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## MARSHAL KULIKOV ON WARSAW PACT 25TH ANNIVERSARY

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 5, May 80 signed to press 22 Apr 80 pp 20-28

[Article by USSR First Deputy Minister of Defense, Commander in Chief of the Combined Armed Forces, MSU V. Kulikov: "A Quarter of a Century Guarding the Achievements of Socialism and Peace"]

[Text] The October socialist revolution opened a new era in mankind's history. After overthrowing the exploiting classes, it firmly established the power of the workers and peasants.

The very first days of the revolution demonstrated that its achievements would have to be decisively and intensely defended by closely uniting forces to totally defeat counterrevolutionary action. "...Facing an enormous front of imperialist powers," wrote V.I. Lenin, "we, who are fighting against imperialism, represent an alliance which requires tight military cohesion...."<sup>1</sup>

This principle of Lenin's was vividly implemented during the Civil War when many nationalities rallied around Soviet Russia to defend the socialist republic; this made it possible to defend the revolution and to establish a voluntary alliance of nations based "on complete trust, a clear understanding of communal unity and completely voluntary agreement."<sup>2</sup>

When the threat of fascist invasion hung over the world, the Soviet Union stepped forward as the initiator of collective security. However, the Western countries, pandering the fascist and militaristic nations, did not enter into an alliance with the USSR and became victims of aggression. It was only after World War II had broken out that an anti-Hitler coalition was established due to the persistent initiatives by the CPSU and the Soviet government. The united political, economic and military efforts of the countries in the alliance and the Soviet Union's decisive contribution guaranteed the total defeat of the fascist bloc.

People throughout the world, and especially in Europe, linked the end of World War II to the possibility of a protracted peace, a peace without war. However, with the rumble of the last cannonades, Anglo-American imperialists were already planning new military hostilities, this time with the Soviet Union.

At the Potsdam Conference, President Truman openly--and with a long-range politico-military aim--announced the atomic weapons test. Somewhat later, without any military necessity, but pointed at the USSR, atom bombs destroyed the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The participants of the Potsdam Conference had barely departed for their homes when the West began a widespread campaign against the agreements reached, a campaign in favor of dividing Germany and reviving West German militarism and revanchism. Having grown rich on the misfortunes of World War II, American imperialism did not want to reconcile itself to the USSR's increased political prestige, the victories of the people's democratic revolutions in the European countries and the revolutionary changes in other countries of the world. Seeing the Soviet Union as the primary bulwark of social change in the world, the United States set out to exacerbate relations with the Soviet Union, to exert economic and political pressure on it and to use atomic blackmail, while attempting to force the Soviet Union to relinquish its all-round assistance to the people's democracies. By thus weakening the socialist camp, the United States intended to clear its path "to world leadership," believing that the people of the world, exhausted from World War II, would yield to their strength and crumbs.

Churchill's speech at Fulton, in which he called for discarding the dreams of cooperating with us, marked the declaration of the "cold war" with the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries.

In the following year, 1947, the "Truman Doctrine" appeared; its ultimate goal was to destroy or weaken the Soviet Union and conquer the people's democracies. Washington politicians believed that the USSR, weak from World War II, would not withstand a confrontation with the U.S.

Aware of the difficult economic situation of our nation, which had begun to restore the national economy destroyed by fascism, and confident that our nation needed a protracted peace like never before, the imperialists intentionally revived the myth of a "Soviet threat," using this to cover their preparations for war against the USSR and forcing the establishment of military blocs for this purpose.

On 4 April 1949, the North Atlantic Treaty, which established the western powers aggressive politico-military bloc--NATO<sup>3</sup>--was signed in Washington and took effect 5 months later; it was directed against the socialist countries, the national liberation movement and also revolutionary democratic changes within the capitalist countries.



Soon afterwards, the U.S. and the western capitalist nations developed a series of aggressive blocs in the Near and Middle East (CENTO), in South-east Asia (SEATO) and in the Pacific (ANZUS); they intensively expanded construction of military bases trying to encircle the Soviet Union and the Socialist countries from all sides.

The beginning of the 50's also marked the accelerated rearmament of the aggressive bloc countries' armies. NATO staffs developed war plans and exercised them during various exercises. These plans, as well as the obvious threat of an imperialist bloc campaign to the East, presented the socialist nations with a very critical problem: how could we defend ourselves against imperialist encroachments.

After a thorough analysis of the international situation and after comprehensive consultations, the communist, socialist and worker parties and governments arrived at a uniform opinion on the need to unite the efforts of the socialist countries to ward off the approaching aggression. On 14 May 1955 in the capital of Poland, the heads of state of the 8 European socialist countries signed a multilateral treaty on friendship, cooperation and mutual assistance; this treaty has gone down in history as the Warsaw Treaty.<sup>4</sup>

The formation of a collective security alliance of socialist countries was a responsive, compulsory step, an urgent requirement in the face of the obvious threat of an attack by the nations of the imperialist bloc.

The Warsaw Pact is exclusively defensive in nature since its goal is to provide armed assistance to members only if threatened by aggression and if self-defense is required. Moreover, it is essentially directed at maintaining peace in Europe and throughout the world by conducting broad peaceful initiatives, campaigning for political and military detente, censuring the imperialists' aggressive aspirations and supporting victims of aggression and people who are fighting for their national liberation. This has established the Warsaw Pact as a completely new type of organization.

During the 25 years of its existence, none of its members has started a military conflict and they have not created a tense situation in a single region of the globe. To the contrary, with their active participation, aggressive actions by the U.S. and the other NATO countries have been cut short in Europe, Asia, the Near East, the Middle East, Northern Africa, Central America, and, finally, the Chinese aggression against socialist Vietnam was stopped. Furthermore, "virtually all the major decisions made during the past decade in international forums to strengthen peace and restrain the arms race, as well as the major negotiations on these issues, have resulted from socialist country initiatives."<sup>5</sup>

A completely different, predatory policy has been conducted by the U.S. and the bloc it heads. According to data from the American Brookings Institute, the U.S. alone has used its armed forces 215 times from 1949 through 1975 to interfere in the internal affairs of other nations and to achieve its political goals.



In assessing the specific actions of the Warsaw Treaty Organization, we can justifiably state that it was established at an appropriate time. The combined economic and military strength of the socialist countries has had a sobering effect on the aggressive imperialist circles headed by the United States; these circles have been convinced that direct military pressure will not shatter the socialist camp and that their aggression may have serious consequences for them.

While relying on the "massive retaliation" doctrine, members of NATO adopted a policy in the latter half of the 1950's to pull individual links out of the Warsaw Treaty Organization with help from the remnants of internal reactionary forces, to destroy our organization's unity and then to destroy the socialist system and the countries in it by a military invasion.

The first of these links was socialist Hungary and then the cutting edge of the counterrevolutionary thrust was directed at the German Democratic Republic and Czechoslovakia.

In carrying out their international duty, Warsaw Pact member nations provided all-round assistance to these countries, including military assistance, to defend socialist achievements. With the support of the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries, the counterrevolutionary revolt in Hungary was suppressed in 1956. In 1961, the imperialist forces created a threat to peace on the borders of the GDR and the FRG, and especially the borders with West Berlin. The German Democratic Republic, the Soviet Union and the other Warsaw Pact countries guaranteed the inviolability of their borders and saved the peace in Europe. In 1968, the fraternal countries assisted the Czechoslovak people in defending socialist achievements. Due to the socialist countries' assistance, Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea not only withstood the protracted, difficult liberation fight against the American aggressors and their lackeys, but they were also victorious.

The persistent socialist country policy of peaceful coexistence tied the hands of the most aggressive circles among the imperialist powers and did not let them start a new world war; it rendered their attempts to use force against the developing countries hopeless. All of this strengthened the socialist community and accelerated the worldwide revolutionary process.

A great deal of success has been achieved by the Warsaw Pact countries in national economic development and in all-round cooperation. The fraternal countries' economic systems are distinguished by high average annual growth rates in industrial output and national income.

At present, the CMEA [Council of Mutual Economic Assistance] produce approximately one-third of the world's industrial output while their 1950 share was 19 percent. If we take the noncrisis years of 1973-1977 which were favorable to the capitalist countries, there was a 32 percent increase in industrial production in the CMEA countries while there was only a 7 percent increase in the developed capitalist countries, i.e., 4.6 times less.

The inviolable Warsaw Pact fortress has established and is developing a firm sociopolitical foundation and it has a uniform economic, ideological and strategic military basis.

Its sociopolitical foundation is the same type of societal and governmental system for each country; its economic basis is a uniform, socialist method of production; its ideological basis is Marxist-Leninist doctrine and their chosen paths of development--building socialism and communism; and its strategic military basis is collective defense based on joint operations by the Combined Armed Forces.

The leading forces of the Warsaw Pact military alliance are the fraternal Marxist-Leninist parties. They are the ones that guarantee ideological unity and coordinated strategies and tactics for the communist and workers movements, for defending the worldwide socialist system and for training their nations' armies to repel imperialist aggression.

The capitalist countries--which united into blocs in fear of the advancing fundamental sociopolitical changes in the world and also for the purpose of maintaining their domination wherever they could, by subjugating poorly developed countries and aggression against the socialist community--are not able to achieve a unity of action. Each year, new conflicts arise among members of their alliances. Some of these conflicts paralyze their efforts; others lead to a disintegration of the blocs. This is what happened to CENTO and SEATO. Just recently, Holland, Belgium, Denmark and Norway prohibited the deployment of medium-range missiles on their territory.

The reason for the internal weakness of the aggressive blocs is that they are based on conflicts among the capitalist countries, inequality among the members of the supremacy of the U.S., which is striving for world domination.

In spite of the fact that a number of imperialism's predatory actions were disrupted or repelled by the world's peace-loving forces and a world war has been averted, the aggressive Western forces, supported by the Chinese hegemons, have not relinquished their intentions to restore their former domination and thereby avoid the approaching crash. They have started proclaiming a military threat from the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries again in order to establish the necessary political and military prerequisites to develop a new round of expensive weapons, achieve military superiority over the Warsaw Pact member nations, drain them economically and then gain a military victory. This is why the Council of NATO made the decision last December to deploy medium-range missiles and cruise missiles in a number of Western European countries. By passing them off as tactical weapons, they are hiding the fact that these missiles are capable of striking major targets in the Warsaw Pact socialist countries up to a line connecting Leningrad, Moscow, Voronezh and Volgograd and, therefore, they are able to significantly weaken the socialist system's economic and military posture. NATO ringleaders also estimate that the missile detection time after launch is extremely limited and this will make it possible for them to deliver a preemptive strike thereby avoiding a powerful retaliatory strike, especially against the United States which prefers to have others fight its wars.

Using the critical situation in the Middle East which resulted from the revolutionary changes in Iran and Afghanistan where the U.S. suffered a significant setback, its militant forces have launched a propaganda war against the Soviet Union and these countries. The true purpose of this propaganda is to create politico-military hysteria in order "to justify" a program for an unprecedented U.S. military buildup; they began to develop and implement this program immediately after James Carter became president.

The apotheosis of the hysterical anti-Soviet campaign underway in the U.S. was James Carter's State of the Union Message which was delivered to Congress on 23 January. In it, he quite openly demanded an increased military posture, the accelerated rearmament of Western Europe, a permanent military presence in the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf, construction of new bases and the expansion and modernization of strategic weapons capable of attacking numerous targets in the Soviet Union. He requested that Congress increase military outlays and bring the defense budget up to a figure in excess of \$200 billion by the mid-1980's.

The people of the world are now waging a widespread campaign to stop the deployment of new nuclear warfare systems in Europe. The parties, governments and entire populations of the socialist countries are actively supporting this movement. Just during the latter part of 1979, the leaders of the socialist countries proposed several significant initiatives to reduce political and especially military tension in the world. They include the new proposals made by L.I. Brezhnev in Berlin on 6 October 1979 after consultations with the other Warsaw Pact members and they are in complete compliance with the Political Consultative Committee's 23 November 1978 Moscow Declaration. They are aimed at reducing the level of military confrontation and at stopping the arms race in Europe, including medium-range missiles.

A month later, L.I. Brezhnev confirmed his Berlin proposals and developed them in his responses to a PRAVDA correspondent.

To implement the decision which was made to unilaterally reduce the strength of Soviet forces in Central Europe, which was announced by Comrade L.I. Brezhnev, general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium, on 6 October 1979 in Berlin, the next (3rd) group of Soviet tank units and their tanks left the GDR on 7 April of this year.<sup>6</sup>

During an exchange of opinions at their 5-6 December 1979 meeting, the Warsaw Pact Foreign Ministers Committee also devoted special attention to the problem of military detente and disarmament in Europe as the key to increasing the campaign to strengthen European peace and security. It was also emphasized that the proposals made at the meeting between the nations on restraining the arms race and transitioning to disarmament are still in force.

However, in spite of the widespread demands of public opinion, the Western governments are launching larger and fiercer aggressive propaganda campaigns. The most protracted campaign has been the one that was launched at the end of last year, the one that the revolutionary events in Iran and Afghanistan served as a pretext for. However, its true purpose is to justify their aggressive policy of sharply increasing their armed forces and, in the final analysis, to prepare for and start a war to destroy the Warsaw Pact countries. The NATO military leadership maintains its forces at a constant state of readiness for a swift blitzkrieg attack through the dozens of major maneuvers and exercises conducted on an annual basis; about 300,000 servicemen and over 1,500 aircraft and 400 fighting ships participate in these exercises. The show of strength is an especially dangerous area of military preparations. An example of this was the concentration of a U.S. armada near the Persian Gulf, an armada whose weapons were aimed at Iran.

In this environment, the socialist countries cannot simply restrict themselves to political means. The Warsaw Pact member nations are simultaneously solving two problems: campaigning to stop the arms race and avert a nuclear war and strengthening their defense capability.

The Warsaw Treaty Organization's structure completely complies with its defensive, pacific goals and missions; a characteristic feature of its structure is the integration of political and military authorities. All activities of the Political Consultative Committee (PCC). According to past traditions the Warsaw Pact member nations fraternal party Central Committee general (1st) secretaries and heads of state have participated in its work. At PCC meetings, they discuss fundamental foreign policy issues and collectively develop major goals to strengthen the socialist countries' defense capability and to carry out their joint defense commitments.

The March 1969 PCC meeting in Budapest made the decision to establish a Committee of Ministers of Defense the Combined Armed Forces Military Council and a Technological Committee; the 1976 PCC meeting in Bucharest established the Foreign Ministers Committee and the Combined Secretariat. The establishment of these agencies was an important milestone in developing the Warsaw Treaty Organization's machinery, Combined Armed Forces command and control and cooperation among the allied armies.

At meetings of the Committee of Ministers of Defense the issues of enhancing our defense posture, strengthening the allied nations' military power and developing and modernizing the Combined Armed Forces (CAF).

The CAF Combined Command consistently implements the decisions of the allied countries' communist and workers parties and of the Defense Ministers Committee to strengthen the fraternal armies' military alliance and to increase their combat capability and combat readiness.



The CAF Military Council makes recommendations. Its proposals are developed collectively by considering the opinions and interests of all allied armies. At the Military Council's 20 meetings between 1969-1979, they examined major issues on the CAF's status and development. It has now become a tradition to hold a Military Council meeting at the end of the year; this meeting thoroughly analyzes the results of the past period's operational and tactical training and sets the following year's missions for the army and navy. Allied army command personnel participation in these meetings facilitates the qualified, mission-oriented accomplishment of assigned missions.

The CAF Headquarters is the Commander in Chief's command element and the operational arm of the Defense Ministers Committee. It prepares proposals on a broad range of army and navy morale and welfare activities; it plans and organizes their operational and tactical training, develops plans for joint maneuvers, exercises and war games at various levels and provides support for them; it consolidates advanced army and navy training techniques and develops recommendations for using them. In its multifaceted activities, the Headquarters relies on the allied armies friendly general (chief) staffs and also on the good traditions which have developed in the CAF during the quarter century of their joint activities.

The CAF Technology Committee develops recommendations and proposals on weapons and equipment development, modernization, integration and standardization; it also coordinates the allied armies research and development efforts. Its establishment accelerated the supply of new types of weapons and equipment to the Warsaw Pact armies.

The activities of the Warsaw Treaty Organization elements flow in an atmosphere of total, mutual understanding and fraternal friendship; they are an example of socialist internationalism in military cooperation and this promotes an in-depth understanding of their international duty by the officers, generals and admirals of these elements and it promotes a high degree of political and professional training for them.

The Warsaw Pact CAF is a friendly military family. Due to the ceaseless concern of the fraternal countries' communist and workers parties, the CAF is a well-trained and well-equipped military body capable of accomplishing the most difficult missions in defending their country and the entire socialist community in any environment.

In a single combat formation for 25 years, the Warsaw Pact armies have provided continuing assistance to each other in all areas; they exchange experience on military training and political indoctrination and they exchange scientific and technological military achievements.

The future development and improvement of the fraternal armies is guaranteed by the high level of economic potential and maximum utilization of all

the advantages provided by coordinating the socialist countries national economic plans. Based on socialist industrialization and the achievements of the scientific and technological revolution, the Warsaw Pact countries have developed a modern defense industry which makes it possible to continually reequip the national armies and the Combined Armed Forces.

The CAF is composed of forces from the various services of all the Pact's member nations and they are deployed pursuant to joint defense requirements as agreed upon among the countries.

All these years, the allied countries have continually devoted the required attention to coordinating their activities on defense, force development and military hardware, weapons and communications equipment development and production; together, they have advanced military science to develop uniform views on the nature of a future war if the imperialists start one and on methods of waging war with coalition formations and on improving the reliability and efficiency of army and navy forces in operations.

During the quarter century of the Warsaw Pact's existence, we have developed firm principles for joint training of staffs and army and navy forces; uniform training methods which take into account the national features of allied armies and the international missions; a sense of mission in training various national armies to perform in coalition force groupings; mutual assistance, an exchange of experience and a distribution of efforts and financial and material outlays.

The community of fraternal armies is multifaceted and it is directed at further enhancing the CAF's defense posture, combat and mobilizational readiness and combat capability. Among the diverse joint arrangements, a major place is occupied by exercises.

Exercises are conducted in a simulated combat environment using all the weapons of armed conflict. Exercise results and the experience gained from them testify to the increased level of land, air and sea training for the army and navy, the enhanced level of commanding generals' (commanders') managerial skills and teamwork among headquarters and other command elements and the increased level of professional training of generals, admirals and officers. They have had a favorable effect on further strengthening the military community and developing feelings of internationalism, friendship and military brotherhood in the men and they have reconfirmed that the CAF are capable of accomplishing the most difficult combat missions in defending the revolutionary achievements of the fraternal countries' people.

Aware of the peaceful nature of the Warsaw Pact's efforts, Western politicians and the military, as well as their propaganda machinery which has become especially adept at distorting the truth, are nevertheless increasing their slander against the socialist countries every year by trying to convince their people of the aggressive nature of the socialist countries and the inevitability that they will soon start a war. They contend that the CAF Command has a "daring thrust" doctrine which will be used to seize

foreign territory in carrying out the missions of the Warsaw Pact parties and governments. The mission of the socialist countries armies is to defend the inviolability of the socialist community and to repel the forces of aggression. If the socialist countries had other intentions, they would not have proposed initiatives like not using nuclear weapons first, establishing nuclear free zones, unilaterally reducing the force level in Europe, resolving points at issue through negotiations and many others. I would also like to point out, incidentally, that it is not in the tradition of the Soviet Command to give such trenchant titles to its military doctrines as "daring thrust." Western propagandists drew this term out of the same series as "massive retaliation" and "flexible response" and attached it to Soviet military doctrine.

The quarter century of the fraternal countries' politico-military alliance and the goals and missions facing the CAF convincingly demonstrate how far-sighted, proper and necessary it was to sign the Warsaw Pact. In containing the actions of aggressors, revanchists and all kinds of people in favor of military adventures for all these years, the Warsaw Pact has firmly guaranteed the sovereignty and security of the socialist community, has strengthened peace in Europe and throughout the world and has provided a favorable environment for achieving the fraternal countries' single goal--building socialism and communism. While appearing before the voters of the Bauman Electoral District on 22 February, L. I. Brezhnev said: "...the past decade marked a further development and enrichment of cooperation among the socialist community. This cooperation is a powerful accelerator for each of the fraternal countries' development. It is also our common guarantee of certain progress...."<sup>7</sup>

CAF personnel are celebrating this famous anniversary with new successes in all military areas. This is necessitated by the security interests of the fraternal countries and it is necessitated by the international environment which continues to be complex, contradictory and explosive. As long as there is a threat of a military attack from the enemies of peace and socialism and as long as there has been no change in the people who favor military adventures, the men of the allied armies, forged in a single international family, will continue to display indefatigable vigilance, steadfastly improve their combat readiness and organization, persistently enhance their fighting skills, strengthen military discipline, multiply and develop the glorious traditions of tactical cooperation and do everything possible to reliably defend the peaceful labor and security of the allied countries.

The great ideas of proletarian internationalism multiply the strength of the fraternal countries and people who are building and defending a new society together.

"In guarding socialism and peace, the Soviet Armed Forces stand in a single combat formation with the Warsaw Pact armies. This year marks a quarter of a century since the formation of our defensive alliance. Its military might serves a just cause and objectively responds to the interests of all freedom loving people."<sup>8</sup>

#### FOOTNOTES

1. V. I. Lenin. "Poln. sobr. soch.," vol 40, p 98.
2. Ibid., p 43.
3. NATO members are: the U.S., Great Britain, France, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxemburg, Portugal, Norway, Denmark, Iceland, Canada (from the time it was founded), Turkey (since Feb 1952), FRG (since May 1955). In 1956, France withdrew its participation in NATO's military organization and Greece did likewise in 1974. - V. K.
4. The Warsaw Pact included: Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, the GDR, Poland, Romania, the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia. Albania has not participated in the Warsaw Treaty Organization since 1962 and it unilaterally denounced the Pact in September 1968. - V. K.
5. "Comrade L. I. Brezhnev's Speech to the Voters of Moscow's Bauman Electoral District on 22 February 1980," KRASNAYA ZVEZDA, 23 Feb 1980.
6. IZVESTIYA, 9 Apr 1980.
7. KRASNAYA ZVEZDA, 23 Feb 1980.
8. D. F. Ustinov. "In the Service of the Homeland's Power," KRASNAYA ZVEZDA, 14 Feb 1980.

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## WARTIME OPERATIONS: LIBERATION OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA

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[Article published under the heading "The Great Patriotic War and the Post-war Period" by Army Gen V. Tolubko "In the Battles To Liberate Czechoslovakia"]

[Text] Thirty-five years have passed since those memorable days in May when Czechoslovakia was completely liberated from the fascist yoke. The further the difficult years of World War II recede into history, the more vivid and total do the heroic achievements of the Soviet people and their servicemen appear before the entire world; in an unprecedentedly difficult fight with world imperialism's shock forces--German fascism--they fought for the Soviet socialist nation's freedom and independence and saved mankind from Nazi subjugation. The Soviet Union also played the decisive role in liberating the Czechoslovak people from Hitler's oppression.

The people of the CSSR and the USSR are linked by a long-standing fraternal friendship. Even during the prewar years, the Soviet Government was fully resolved to save Czechoslovakia from fascist aggression. When fascist Germany actually threatened Czechoslovakia's independence in the Fall of 1938, the Soviet government announced it would provide crucial assistance to Czechoslovakia even if its ally France renounced its commitment.<sup>1</sup> For this purpose, the Soviet Union conducted a number of major strategic actions. In September 1938, 30 rifle divisions and other forces were moved forward to areas directly adjacent to the western border.<sup>2</sup> The Belorussian and Kiev Special Military Districts air forces were put on alert.

In the disquieting days at the end of September, the Soviet government took new steps to increase its forces mobilization and operational readiness. At the instruction of the government, our military command put another 30 rifle divisions, 6 cavalry divisions, 2 tank corps and 15 independent tank brigades on alert. An additional 328,700 men were called up from the reserves. In addition, there was a delay in discharging servicemen from the army.<sup>3</sup> In the Western European USSR, a powerful air group was formed, consisting of more than 2,000 aircraft of all types.<sup>4</sup>

At that same time, President Benes' government--against the Czechoslovak people's will and resolve to defend their homeland against fascism--refused the military assistance offered by the Soviet Union and unconditionally accepted the Munich Agreement on the division of Czechoslovakia, which was concluded on 30 September 1938 by England, France, Germany, and Italy, and handed the country over to Hitler's barbarians to be torn to pieces.

Czechoslovakia finally lost its national independence in March 1939. Having signed the Munich Agreement and having guaranteed Czechoslovakia's "new borders," the English and French governments hastened to recognize its seizure by Germany. True to its policy of friendship with the Czechoslovak people, only the Soviet Union censured Hitler's aggression and, in its 18 March 1939 note to the German government, it announced that it did not recognize the division of Czechoslovakia and its inclusion in Germany.<sup>5</sup>

The imperialists' Munich deal was the beginning of the greatest national catastrophe in the Czechoslovak people's history. It revealed the total bankruptcy of bourgeois Czechoslovakia's foreign policy orientation toward England, France and the U.S. Since then, the word Munich has been a synonym for treachery and underhanded political intrigues. By laying bare the treachery of Czechoslovakia's imperialist allies, the events at Munich demonstrated to the Czechoslovak people that they would only be able to defend their national interests in close cooperation with the Soviet Union--the only power which remained true to its duty as an ally of the Czechoslovak Republic.

The infamous Munich dictate and the subsequent abolition of the Czechoslovak Republic by the fascists did not break the masses resolve to fight against the invaders and their bourgeois underlings within the country.

Under the leadership of the Czechoslovak Communist Party (CPC) and influenced by the Soviet Armed Forces victories during World War II, an anti-fascist, national liberation movement developed within the country. A significant role in increasing the anti-fascist struggle was played by the Soviet-Czechoslovak Friendship, Mutual Assistance and Post-war Cooperation Treaty which was concluded on 12 December 1943 in Moscow.

After the Soviet forces victory at Stalingrad, the CPC central leadership headed by Klement Gottwald directed the Resistance Movement to step up guerrilla fighting and all other forms of fighting with the fascist occupying forces. At that time, the national liberation movement in Slovakia became very broad in scope. There was a requirement to direct the party and all the workers to prepare a national uprising in Slovakia. The underground leadership of the Slovak Communist Party, which was established in August 1943, took this mission. Party members included K. Smidke, G. Husak, L. Novomesky and others. The Slovak national uprising, which flared up on 29 August 1944, was the beginning of Czechoslovakia's national democratic

revolution. It got underway while the Soviet Army and L. Svoboda's Czechoslovak I Army Corp, which was formed in the USSR, were victoriously approaching Czechoslovakia's borders.

The Slovak national uprising spread over a 15,000 square kilometer area; approximately 12,000 partisans took part in it. About 60,000 soldiers of the Slovak puppet army were ready to go over to the insurgents. But, due to the Eastern Slovak Corp Commander's treason, Hitler's forces were able to disarm the Slovak divisions. Only part of the soldiers (approximately 18,000 men) were able to link up with the insurgents. The insurgents were separated from Soviet forces by the almost impassable Carpathian Mountains whose defense had been reinforced by the fascist German Command after the Slovak divisions located there were disarmed.

On 31 August 1944, Czechoslovakia's Ambassador in Moscow, Z. Fierlinger, requested that the Soviet government provide military assistance to the Slovak insurgents. The same request was also made by K. Gottwald, secretary of the CPC Central Committee.

The Soviet forces victorious advance in Poland and Romania established a favorable environment to bypass the Carpathians from the north and south. Therefore, our command did not plan an offensive on the Carpathians from the east. However, considering the requirement to provide assistance to the Slovak patriots, the Headquarters, Supreme High Command adjusted its plans and decided to provide the assistance in two areas: first, an immediate delivery of weapons to the insurgents and an airborne assault by the Czechoslovak units formed in the USSR in the areas liberated by the insurgents; second, the Soviet Army's preparation and conduct of the Eastern Carpathian Operation.

The Soviet Command provided a great deal of assistance to the insurgents in weapons. Based on incomplete data, from the beginning of the uprising to 15 October 1944, total deliveries included 2,000 rifles, over 2,000 automatic weapons, 467 light machineguns, 900 medium machineguns, 256 anti-tank guns, 23 heavy machineguns, mortars, ammunition, medicine, etc., with a total weight of 796 tons. The Czechoslovak 1st Independent Fighter Air Regiment and the Czechoslovak 2nd Air Assault Brigade, which were completely equipped with Soviet weapons and military hardware, were transferred to the area of the uprising. All Soviet partisan detachments operating in Czechoslovakia received the order to provide all possible assistance to the Slovak people in their fight against the fascist invaders.<sup>6</sup>

But, the decisive factor in the Czechoslovak people's victory was the Soviet Army's direct participation in Czechoslovakia's liberation, for which it waged 8 months of difficult fighting. The Soviet Armed Forces combat operations for the liberation of Czechoslovakia can be divided into three periods: the first period (September-December 1944) included the operations to provide assistance to the Slovak national uprising and to

drive Hitler's forces and their underlings out of Eastern and Southeastern Slovakia; the second period (January-April 1945) included the operations to drive Hitler's forces out of Central Czechoslovakia; and the third period (May 1945) consisted of the Prague Offensive Operation which led to Czechoslovakia's total liberation.

Each of the Soviet forces operations was distinguished by its own special features and each made an important contribution to the depository of the Soviet art of war. Thus, in the 1st and 4th Ukrainian Fronts' (Marshal of the Soviet Union I. S. Konev and General of the Army I. Ye. Petrov, commanding) 8 September through 28 October 1944 Eastern Carpathian Operation--in which General L. Svoboda's Czechoslovak I Army Corp also actively participated--they not only gained experience in routing forces but also in waging combat operations in enormous wooded, mountainous terrain with an extremely limited number of vehicle roads, along separate axes and on an extended front. Soviet units had to cross high passes and mountain rivers flowing through narrow valleys and rocky gorges.

During the preparatory period for the Eastern Carpathian Operation, along with the unit training in conducting an offensive in wooded, mountainous terrain, special attention was devoted to acquainting personnel with the politico-military situation in Czechoslovakia, with the rules of conduct for the men in Czechoslovakia and their relationships with the local population and to preparing the morale of the EM, NCO's and officers.

As in other formations, 38th Army (Col Gen K. S. Moskalenko, commanding) political agencies and party and Komsomol organizations under the leadership of Gen A. A. Yepishev, member of the War Council, did a lot to make each man aware of the political situation in Czechoslovakia and the importance of the forthcoming operation; and they did a lot to explain the operational missions to personnel and to guarantee fraternal tactical cooperation with the men of the Czechoslovak I Army Corp.

In addition to resolving numerous urgent issues, Lt Gen Zhuravlev's 18th Army political agencies, where Col L. I. Brezhnev was the officer-in-charge of the political section, devoted a great deal of attention to strengthening the battalion political officer link and company primary party and Komsomol organizations and to comprehensively training political officers at all levels to work with personnel during the mountain offensive outside our homeland. For this purpose, the army political section conducted a number of seminars, briefings and a large number of individual discussions in formations and units.

The multifaceted party political work conducted in formations and units by political agencies and party and Komsomol organizations established an atmosphere among the troops of unshakable confidence in the successful accomplishment of a most difficult combat mission in the large mountainous area.



During the operations, the 18th and 1st Guards Armies and the Czechoslovak 1 Army Corp stubbornly pushed through to the Main Carpathian Range, to the passes over it and to the Czechoslovak border. By 30 September, the units which were advancing in a strip approximately 300 km wide had reached a depth of 50 km, broken through to the passes over the Main Carpathian Range and crossed it with a frontage in excess of 100 km; on 6 October, the Czechoslovak 1 Army Corp, in conjunction with the LXVII Rifle and XXXI Tank Corps, seized the Dukla Pass. Czechoslovak fighting men entered their native land by liberating the village of Vyshny Komarnik.

Emphasizing the enormous political importance of the Soviet and Czechoslovak forces successful advance through the Dukla Pass, K. Gottwald said: "At Dukla, there was a slogan which firmly became part of our people's feelings and awareness: 'With the Soviet Union for Eternity!; with the Soviet Union Forever!'"<sup>7</sup>

On the day Czechoslovak fighting men entered their native land, L. Svoboda stated in response to questions from a KRASNAYA ZVEZDA correspondent: "We have seen our brothers, the men of the Red Army, heroically fight at Khar'kov, Kiev, Belaya Tserkov', the Gornyy Tikich River and Ceska Volyn. They knew that they were not only fighting for their homeland but also for all the oppressed European people and for Czechoslovakia. Now that the Soviet fighting men have cleaned the enemy out of their homeland, they are shedding their blood in Czechoslovakia and our feelings for them have grown even stronger. Soviet servicemen are fighting for Czechoslovakia just as they fought for Moscow, Stalingrad and for other Soviet cities and villages. We will never forget this and our people will be eternally grateful to their liberators for their unselfish, fraternal assistance. You can be sure that our friendship with you will last forever."<sup>8</sup>

The day of 6 October became the symbol of the Soviet and Czechoslovak fighting men's unfading combat glory and heroism, a symbol of the tactical cooperation among the two fraternal armies and, every year, the country celebrates it as a prominent holiday marking the formation of the Czechoslovak People's Army.

On 27 October, Soviet forces seized Ushgorod and broke out at the Hungarian Plain. In his report to the Front War Council and Political Directorate on the results of the Carpathian military action, Col L. I. Brezhnev, OIC of the 18th Army Political Section, reported: "Within a relatively brief period of time...our forces successfully overcame all difficulties, threw the enemy out of his prepared defensive positions, inflicted significant damage on him and..., with decisive assistance from the 2nd Ukrainian Front (MSU R. Ya. Malinovsky, commanding--Ed) broke through to the Hungarian Plain....The Carpathian Operation was a serious test of all our army's personnel, from soldier to general. We successfully passed this test."<sup>9</sup>

The Eastern Carpathian Operation ended on 28 October. The 1st and 4th Ukrainian Fronts drove the enemy out of the western Ukraine and liberated the Transcarpathian Ukraine and part of Eastern Slovakia. However, they were not able to break through to the territory liberated by the insurgents since Hitler's forces had developed a significant preponderance of force by that time and, with the support of Tiso's puppet Slovak government, were able to reoccupy the areas liberated by the insurgents. But, these losses did not mean the capitulation of the patriotic forces or the end of the armed conflict against the occupying forces and Tiso's regime. The main body of the insurgent forces and the partisans went into the mountains and began fighting in the enemy's rear. As G. Husak noted, "nobody surrendered, neither militarily nor politically."<sup>10</sup> In spite of its failure, the uprising occupies a prominent place in the Slovak and Czech people's history. It was the beginning of the national democratic revolution in the country.

Military operations in Czechoslovakia did not cease during the subsequent months. During November-December 1944, the 4th Ukrainian Front advanced 35-70 km to the west and liberated a significant part of Southeastern Slovakia while the 2nd Ukrainian Front advanced in the northwestern sector, crossed the Hungarian-Czechoslovak border in mid-December and liberated a large part of Slovakia's southern regions. However, the decisive battles began in January 1945.

In January-February, both formations advanced over 200 km, crossed a major part of the Western Carpathian Mountains and the Slovak Erzgebirge, liberated Kosice and Presov districts and part of the Banska Bystrica District in coordination with the partisans--an area populated by approximately 1.4 million people--and established a favorable environment for a future offensive.

In the spring of 1945, two other major offensive operations were conducted in Czechoslovakia by the 4th (The Moravska-Ostrava Operation) and the 2nd (the Bratislava-Brno Operation) Ukrainian Fronts. During these operations, Soviet, Romanian and Czechoslovak forces advanced 150-350 km and completely liberated Slovakia, part of Moravia and the country's industrial and administrative centers--Moravska-Ostrava, Bratislava-Brno and other cities. The total area of the liberated regions was 40,800 square meters with a population of over 4.3 million.<sup>11</sup>

The final operation in the liberation of occupied Czech territory was the Prague Operation--the final operation of World War II in Europe. It was being fought while our Victory Banner was already flying over Berlin and Soviet fighting men had already met the Allies at the Elbe. Czech territory was the last arena of resistance for the defeated fascist Wehrmacht.

The strategic concept for the Prague Operation consisted of inflicting two powerful thrusts against both flanks of Army Group Center and a subsequent exploitation of these thrusts along converging axes to Prague. The goal

was to encircle the main body of the enemy's forces east of Prague and to liberate the Czechoslovak capital. The thrusts were made from an area north-west of Dresden by the 1st Ukrainian Front and from an area south of Brno by the 2nd Ukrainian Front. At the same time as the primary thrust, plans called for the 4th Ukrainian Front to advance from the East.

The concept for the operation had already been developed at the end of April. Plans called for the three fronts--which also included the Polish Forces 2nd Army, the Czechoslovak 1 Army Corps and the Romanian 1st and 4th Armies--to totally defeat the enemy force grouping of 65 divisions, 3 brigades and 15 independent regiments.<sup>12</sup> Our total force strength exceeded 2 million.<sup>13</sup>

The battle groups' transition to the offensive was set for 7 May. But, in the beginning of May, spontaneous patriotic outbursts flared up in a number of Czechoslovakia's occupied cities and they grew into an armed uprising in Prague by 5 May. After engaging in bloody combat with SS units, the insurgents radioed a request to the Soviet Command and the Allies for immediate assistance. Because of this, the operation got underway a day early.

On the night of 9 May, Gen D. D. Lelyushenko's 4th Guards Tank Army, Gen P. S. Rybalko's 3rd Guards Tank Army, 1st Ukrainian Front, made an 80-km dash and, at dawn, their forward detachments entered Prague; behind them were the advance units of Gen V. N. Gordov's 3rd Guards Army and Gen N. P. Pukhov's 13th Army. The same day the advance detachments of Gen P. A. Kuroshkin's 60th Army and Gen K. S. Moskalenko's 38th Army, 4th Ukrainian Front, entered Czechoslovakia's capital from the east. From the south, units of Gen A. G. Kravchenko's 6th Guards Tank Army and Gen I. A. Pliyev's 1st Guards Mechanized Cavalry Group, 2nd Ukrainian Front, entered the city. With the active support of the insurgents and the city's population, the capital of Czechoslovakia was totally liberated on 9 May. On 10 and 11 May, they took approximately 860,000 EM and officers prisoner and seized 9,500 artillery pieces and mortars, 1,800 tanks and self-propelled guns, 1,100 aircraft and a large number of other weapons and military hardware.<sup>14</sup> At the same time, Soviet forces continued their push to the west and, on 11 May, they met the American forces along the line Chemnitz, Karlovy Vary, Pilsen.

The Prague Operation was another vivid display of our superior art of war. It went down in history as a model of high mobility and skillful force coordination, as an example of flexible and firm force command and control in a difficult environment and as an example of achieving major politico-military results within a short time frame.

The major political results of the Soviet Army's 8-month fight in Czechoslovakia were Czechoslovakia's liberation from more than 6 years of fascist oppression, the development of an environment to establish a new people's democratic nation and the Czechoslovak people's upsetting the designs of reactionary circles to restore the old order.

The strategic importance of the Soviet Army's liberation mission in Czechoslovakia was that the fascist German armies suffered a major defeat. A total of 122 enemy divisions were destroyed, routed or taken prisoner in Czechoslovakia.<sup>15</sup>

Soviet fighting men paid a dear price for the fraternal Czechoslovak people's freedom. Over 140,000 RM and officers died a hero's death and 365,000 were wounded.<sup>16</sup> As a sign of the profound, eternal gratitude to the dead, numerous monuments were erected, city and village streets were named after the heroes and many of those among the living were elected honorary citizens of various cities in the country.

The day of the Soviet Forces' entry into Prague--9 May--has become a great national holiday for the Czechoslovak people--Liberation Day. It marked a radical turning point in the people's fate; within a short period of time under the leadership of the Communist Party, they were able to make important revolutionary changes in politics, economics and culture and to firmly set out on the path of socialist development.

MSU L. I. Brezhnev, general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium and chairman of the National Defense Council, took an active part in the fighting for the Czechoslovak people's honor and freedom from the very first to the last day of the fighting.

In the postwar years, the traditional friendship between the Soviet and Czechoslovak people reached unprecedented heights and became a fraternal, eternal friendship. This friendship reliably serves the cause of strengthening the socialist community's unity and power. It is based on common goals--building communism and a bright future for all mankind.

#### FOOTNOTES

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## WARTIME OPERATIONS: BOMBER AND FIGHTER COORDINATION

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[Article published under the heading "The Great Patriotic War and the Postwar Period," by AF Maj Gen L. Mikryukov: "Improving Front Fighter and Bomber Aviation Coordination"]

[Text] An analysis of the experience in the Great Patriotic War shows that coordination between fighter and bomber aircraft improved in the following basic areas: developing reliable rendezvous options for fighter and bomber formations which were carrying out the same operational mission; improving joint combat operations planning and execution; looking for the most rational composite combat formation; and improving the reliability of bomber protection against opposing enemy fighters and antiaircraft artillery.

These areas are closely interrelated; therefore, tracing the changes which occurred within each area is rather difficult. Nevertheless, this article attempts to isolate the main coordination problems whose solutions received the concentrated efforts of air unit and formation commanders and staff during the war.

During the first period of the war, the basic principles for effecting fighter and bomber coordination complied with the requirements of prewar field manuals and took into account the experience of the first painful battles. These principles were subsequently supplemented and adjusted but remained basically the same in substance.

Loaded with weapons and short on maneuverability, the bombers required protection against enemy air attacks and suppression of land-based anti-aircraft fire. But, as a rule, they were not based with the fighters allocated to cover them. Therefore, the first requirement was to develop airborne rendezvous options for the strike and support formations.

During the first period of the war, there were four alternatives for the fighter rendezvous with the bomber formations being protected: over the

fighter airfield (the primary method); on the ground (at the bomber or fighter airfield) followed by a joint takeoff to carry out the operational mission; at the front lines, assisted by ground-based signal equipment; and by estimated time to target (strike objective). The senior commander effecting coordination selected the most appropriate option for the situation. The option was used to establish the method of joining up and forming the overall combat formation.

Like all the other elements of coordination, a reliable rendezvous could not have been effected without prior coordination of many important issues among the executing elements. The timetable, as a management document, was a time schedule of each formation's operations by flight phase. In addition, a coordination manual and a brevity code chart were worked up. This chart contained the basic signals for supporting coordination and exchanging information. When there were no radios on board, the codes were given by banking, doing a slight dive or climb or firing colored flares or machine-gun rounds. This meant: "visual contact," "target at...," "come closer," "I'm a friendly," etc.

During the preparations for a joint sortie, it was mandatory to establish an airborne force disposition overlay; escort pickup and dropoff boundaries; operating procedures in the target area; and a method for covering bomber landings. This data was disseminated to all flying personnel and also to forward control (monitoring) centers. A basic principle was observed during planning: there should be as few vague points in the air as possible. A change in the situation was not a reason for violating the concept or flight plan.

To achieve total, mutual understanding between coordinating formations, the best method was believed to be personal contact between the formation leaders before or after prior coordination on all issues by staff officers. Sortie preparation time was reduced and there were fewer preparations when the strike and covering formation commanders already had experience carrying out joint operational missions.

One of the most difficult problems was forming a combat formation which would insure the most rational aircraft and formation location to accomplish the operational mission. The primary mission of the fighters in the overall formation was to protect the bombers enroute and in the target area. To accomplish this mission, they had to repel all enemy aircraft attacks without letting them break through to the aircraft being protected. The basic difficulty was that the enemy's numerical superiority in fighters over his own territory gave them the freedom of selecting attack sectors and they could make better use of the element of surprise.

It was not possible to allocate the number of fighters required for escort duty during the first period of the war. Frequently, due to shortfalls, bombers were forced to operate without any cover at all in the air.

In this very difficult environment, the most feasible types of coordination were developed and valuable combat experience was gained piece by piece. The Leningrad Front AF Headquarters handbook on effecting escort coordination between fighters, bombers and ground attack aircraft (approved by the Front AF Commander, AF Maj Gen S. D. Rybal'chenko, on 1 August 1942) pointed out that proper, clear-cut coordination would significantly reduce the probability of aircraft losses to enemy fighters and it would increase the effectiveness of strikes against assigned targets.

Fighter cover for bomber escort duty was divided into two groups: close cover consisting of one-third of the force, trailing behind (150-200m) and above, which made it possible to see the entire formation being covered; and an attack holding formation consisting of two-thirds of the force, trailing behind (400-500m) and above (600-1200m). The first formation's mission was to repel enemy attacks without breaking away from the aircraft being escorted; the second formation's mission was to engage enemy fighters at distant approaches to the bombers and keep the fighters from penetrating to them.

Thus, the fighter cover had a vertically separated, extended formation. It was typical that the close escort formation was assigned a smaller part of the force. With its relative freedom of maneuver, the attack group had a larger aircraft strength and was able to operate aggressively according to the situation.

The best capability was provided by the three-tier rather than the two-tier, bomber protection option: the close cover formation, a reinforcement formation 400-600m higher and an attack formation with an altitude separation of 800-1200m above the close cover group formation. If they knew fighters were on patrol in the target area, the reinforcement formation was replaced with a holding formation. It flew 10-15 km ahead and engaged the enemy, drawing enemy fighters away and insuring that the bombers were free to accomplish their mission.

In spite of the efforts made by unit and formation commanders and staffs to improve operational coordination when accomplishing a single mission, there were still significant gaps in effecting cover. For example, there were cases of bomber mission aborts because of the escort fighters' failure to rendezvous (the 235th Fighter Air Division in July 1942). The cover formations did not always maintain altitude separation; they unjustifiably descended and lost their maneuverability.

The 9 September 1942 order from the USSR People's Commissar of Defense noted that our fighters were frequently on their own while protecting bombers and made it possible for them to be shot down with impunity. Therefore, it was directed that escort fighters could only count as combat sorties the ones where bombers carried out their operational mission without any losses to enemy fighter attacks.



Experience shows that Soviet fighters efficiently corrected these deficiencies and gave the enemy stubborn resistance. Combat steadfastly improved coordination with bombers.

During the first period of the war, there was a continual shortage of fighters and this precluded a broad selection of escort methods. The reliability of protection was still not high enough. The basic management documents were the coordination handbook, the coordination timetable and the brevity code chart. Fighters were not permitted to leave the bombers being covered. An exception was made for suppressing antiaircraft artillery and for tying down enemy fighters in the target area. In this case, a specially designated fighter formation went out ahead 3-5 minutes before the strike to suppress ground-based air defense facilities and to engage enemy aircraft. Fighters were primarily used for the formation carrying out the primary mission, which, for bombers, was considered to be operations against battlefield targets. (In the battle for Stalingrad, 67.9 percent of the total aircraft sorties were used for this mission.)

During the second period of the war, fighter and bomber coordination was positively influenced by such factors as winning strategic air supremacy, commissioning new aircraft, improving the reliability of radio communications, increasing the amount of radio equipment within the tactical aircraft control system, using radar-equipped GCI sites and the increased level of strategic and tactical training gained by air force commanders and staffs at all echelons.

Compared to the first period of the war, there were significant changes in the tactical air force's equipment. In February 1942, 75 percent of the Southwest Front AF total combat sorties were accomplished without radio communications; at the end of the year, the exchange of information using signal panels, flares and machinegun bursts was moved to the back burner. In his 27 March 1942 order, the AF commander, AF Lt Gen P. F. Zhigarev, demanded a thorough preparation of radio communications for coordination among air force commands and he focused special attention on using radios in fighters both to control composite formations in flight and to communicate with the ground.

The composite formation leader was able to make adjustments to fighter positions within the overall formation; for example, he was able to increase protection for one of the flanks, move the holding formation ahead and tighten or loosen up the combat formation. The radio made it possible to meet one of the combat formation's primary requirements--the requirement for flexibility, to change formation quickly when the situation changed.

However, the covering force disposition developed during the first period of the war was retained. With the limited number of fighters, they organized two formations--the attack formation and the close escort formation. The attack formation was located above and to the rear and the elements

were stacked. When there were sufficient forces, a third fighter formation was assigned. Its mission was to tie down the enemy in the target area, destroy enemy singletons which had broken away from their formations and reinforce the close cover formation in repelling attacks.

During day-to-day combat operations, good preparations were usually only made for a single sortie and not for an entire battle or operation. As a result, units of the various air force commands did not completely coordinate all requirements and did not acquire skills for joint operations over an extended period of time. The follow-up, unscheduled, isolated raids after the first powerful strike were not very effective. To avoid such incidents, part of the fighters were put under the operational control of the bomber and ground-attack air divisions or corps during operations.

For example, the 132nd Bomber Air Division bomber and fighter coordination handbook for joint operations, which was approved by the 4th Air Army commander, AF Col Gen K.A. Vershinin on 26 November 1943, required the air army headquarters operations order to designate a certain part of the fighters for continuing cover of bomber operations and to organize a meeting of bomber and fighter formation leaders before operations got underway to get personally acquainted and to agree on overall joint operational issues and mission details.

The bombers usually encountered their strongest opposition and suffered losses to enemy fighters in the strike area. Their cover during this stage of their sortie required significant improvement. Therefore, before the main formation arrived at the target, they began to chase enemy fighters out of the strike area (clear the air).

The sweep group, made up of well-trained pilots, was sent to the target area 15-20 minutes before the strike and engaged enemy aircraft there while keeping them from approaching our bombers.

Subsequent experience demonstrated however that the allocation of numerous close cover formations without any freedom of action led to inefficient employment of forces and to diverting fighters away from air-to-air engagements during enemy attacks. Therefore, increased security (6-8 fighters) for large-scale raids was only used for the first and last bomber formations in a wave. After the strike, the cover formation consisted of a single aircraft element and the remaining fighters engaged enemy aircraft by leaving their combat formation.

Thus, during the second period of the war, new elements appeared in fighter and bomber coordination. The close escort method was supplemented by chasing the enemy out of the strike area (clearing the air). The sweep formation also suppressed enemy AAA in the target area. The fighters received a greater opportunity to wage independent air-to-air combat on distant approaches to the bombers. Procedures were established for coordinating

fire when repelling enemy fighter attacks. Due to the increased speed and enhanced aircraft maneuverability, there was an increase in the composite formation's flexibility. The fighter cover quickly covered the areas where the enemy had prepared an attack. There was an emphasis on using the same units for joint operations.

Our flying personnel's methods of preparing for a joint sortie also improved. The SAF Commander required that air force operations against enemy military targets with strong air defense protection would only be conducted with all the necessary estimates and after thoroughly working out coordination issues; and, if the situation permitted, a training session would be organized at the range. As a result, there was an increase in the reliability of protection which is attested to by the drop in bomber losses. In 1941, tactical bomber force losses were 1 aircraft shot down per 23 sorties; in 1942 it was 1 per 45 sorties and, with the transition to regimental formations in the second half of 1943, it was 1 loss per 67 sorties.<sup>1</sup>

During the third period of the war, our air superemacy provided the bombers with large freedom of action. The tactical air strike force could remain in the strike area for an extended period of time and make full use of its firepower.

When major tactical targets were being bombed, the escort formation was still two-tiered (the close escort and attack formations) or three-tiered, consisting of a third, (high altitude) reinforcement formation which included the best trained pilots. This formation's mission was to paralyze enemy fighter activities with short, unexpected attacks using its altitude advantage and thereby assist the attack group in repelling the enemy assault. The particular option selected depended upon anticipated enemy opposition.

The cover formations could be beyond visual contact with each other; therefore, clear-cut implementation of the joint flight plan was especially important. Air force operations against enemy rear-area targets with strong air defense protection were conducted on the basis of such a plan with all the required estimates after working out coordination issues in detail on the ground. An example was the 6-8 May 1943 thorough preparations for and execution of the large-scale strikes against 17 enemy airfields at Kursk by 112 bombers, 156 ground attack aircraft and 166 fighters of the 1st, 15th, 16th, 2nd, 17th and 8th Air Armies.<sup>2</sup>

When the bombing strike was to be delivered near the front lines--as it was for example in the Vyborg, East Prussian, Vistula-Oder, Berlin and other operations--the actions of cover formations were coordinated from a ground command post which received air situation data from air warning and radar sites.

The increased number of fighters in the SAF and their enhanced combat capabilities made it possible to use an integrated method for providing

bomber support during the third period of the war: chase, containment, close escort and backup formations functioned according to a single plan. The first two formations maintained operational coordination with the bombers while the latter formations maintained tactical coordination. In addition, protection was established for individual sections of the route--an air patrol escort where fighters were assigned a sector to search for the enemy and cut him off from our bombers. For example, on 27 June 1944 during an hour and a half large-scale strike against an enemy column southeast of Bobruysk, 4 bomber and 4 ground-attack divisions of the 16th Air Army operated in regimental formations without fighter escort. But, from 1900 to 2100 hours, the entire strike area was sealed off by fighters from 3 fighter air divisions.<sup>2a</sup>

When fighters operated at the same time as the bombers and in the same area on a joint flight controlled by a single commander (command post), the type of coordination was called tactical.

When fighters were accomplishing a common mission with other air force components but the fighters operated without close liaison communications with them (sealing off airfields, chasing enemy fighters out of the strike area ahead of time or putting up a screen), the type of coordination was called operational. After the fighters received more freedom, operational coordination made it possible for them to operate more aggressively and show broad initiative in selecting methods of air-to-air combat. This is how it was for example in the 3rd Fighter Air Corps (AF Lt Gen Ye. Ya. Savatskiy, commander) of the 1st Air Army when combat operations were being set up for the first day of the Belorussian Operation.

Thus, during the third period of the war, fighter coordination with other tactical air elements was supplemented by the following elements: clearing the air in the target area (chasing the enemy away) was integrated with lone wolf operations. When there was no opposition in the air, the escort fighters began to be used more frequently to suppress ground-based air defense systems. The lone wolfs also suppressed enemy antiaircraft batteries, detecting them when they fired. Close escort formation leaders received complete freedom to select bomber defense tactics during the strike; a patrol escort was used for bombers; when organizing protection, the fighters left a backup for reinforcement which was on maximum alert at the airfield.

When effecting operational coordination, special attention was focused on developing a detailed joint flight plan.

The reliability of bomber protection continued to improve. . . . , there was an average of 1 combat loss per 86 sorties and, in 1945, it was 1 loss per 126 sorties. To a significant extent, this was due to the air supremacy which was gained during the second period of the war and the daytime bombers' transition to concentrated strikes primarily in large formations.<sup>3</sup>



The integrated method of supporting bomber strikes where the majority of the fighters were included in the sweep, screening and patrol formations without losing their freedom of maneuver or offensive capabilities had the greatest effect. Only individual elements or flights continued to provide cover for bombers. However, the employment of this method was difficult and had to be combined with advance ground-based air defense suppression in the air force strike forces operational area. For example, this is what the 2nd Air Army's fighters did on the morning of 15 July in the L'vov-Sandomierz Operation when the 4th Bomber Air Corps delivered a large-scale strike against an enemy tank force which was attacking units of the 38th Army near Plugav. The large-scale strike lasted for 4 hours. The fighters beat off all enemy aircraft attempts to interfere with execution of the strike. The air battles saw 30 enemy aircraft shot down.<sup>4</sup>

The following conclusions can be drawn from an analysis of fighter and bomber tactical and operational wartime coordination.

The success of coordination was guaranteed by precisely and clearly assigning missions which took into account the combat capabilities of each air arm; by personal contact between coordinating formation (unit) commanders and by a uniform understanding of the missions they would be accomplishing; by jointly drawing up the operations and by compiling and following concrete flight plans; by properly distributing responsibilities for repelling attacks and by establishing effective defensive fire; by reliable communications and a timely exchange of information; and by uninterrupted control in the air.

Combat experience, analyzing and using it, was a major factor which influenced improved coordination. The experience gained in fighter and bomber coordination during the Great Patriotic War is being successfully used for AF unit tactical and operational training. Fighter tactics for local wars in the postwar period still contained such methods as clearing the air, sealing off airfields, close escort and putting up screens for bombers.

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## WARTIME OPERATIONS: ANTISUBMARINE WARFARE IN THE NORTHERN FLEET

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[Article, published under the heading "The Great Patriotic War and the Postwar Period," by Doctor of Historical Sciences Capt 1st Rank (Res) A. Basov: "From the Northern Fleet's Antisubmarine Forces Experience"]

[Text] By the beginning of the war, each fleet had antisubmarine forces to counter submarines: ships, aircraft and fixed shore detection facilities. In order to defend bases and certain shore installations and to cover straits and choke points to prevent enemy submarine penetrations, provisions were made for special ships--minelayers and netlayers--to lay antisubmarine minefields and net barriers. The disposition of minefields, net defenses and antisubmarine detection facilities in depth--deployed at choke points or in a specific, open-sea area--comprised an antisubmarine barrier (position).

The best method of countering submarines was considered to be preventing them from entering a fleet base area or operational area. To accomplish this, a permanently operational antisubmarine defense of naval bases was organized in peacetime. In conjunction with this, sea-going commands, convoys and landing units organized their own antisubmarine defense. During the war, many transport ships were armed with naval ordnance, depth charges and other weapons for defending against submarine attacks.

Thus, antisubmarine warfare (ASW) included the fleet's combat operations and special arrangements to prevent enemy submarine attacks against ships (vessels), naval bases and other shore installations and also to deny them intelligence gathering and minelaying activities. This was achieved by destroying the submarines or chasing them out of fleet base areas and operating areas.

During the Great Patriotic War, the Northern Fleet gained the greatest experience in ASW. In contrast to the Atlantic, where German submarines operated independently, they were used in conjunction with the 5th Air

Force and a major surface ship squadron in the North. Between Northern Norway and Spitzbergen, an area which was monitored by enemy aircraft and ships, submarines were only engaged during the transit of foreign convoys.

#### The Establishment of Antisubmarine Barriers

In 1949, a minefield and artillery position were established at the White Sea choke points; they played a restraining role: enemy subs did not enter the White Sea.<sup>1</sup> But, as in the Baltic, they attempted to block the antisubmarine barrier lanes used by Soviet transports and fighting ships.

In 1942, systematic actions by German submarines got underway in the western part of the Northern Route. There were nine incidents where polar stations were fired on. In the eastern Barents Sea and in the Kara Sea, 15 submarines and 6 surface ships laid 870 mines (416 anchored mines and 454 bottom mines) in 27 fields.<sup>2</sup>

To protect the Arctic against submarine penetrations, the Northern Fleet began to deploy antisubmarine forces near Novaya Zemlya. The defeat of Allied Convoy PQ-17 in July 1942 accelerated the establishment of strong points and defended points to protect convoys and vessels. In August, the Soviet Command decided to establish the Novaya Zemlya Naval Base.<sup>3</sup> Forces were deployed near Yugorskiy Shar, Matochkin Shar and Russkaya Gavan'. Shore artillery batteries and signal stations were located in the same areas. North of Cape Zhelaniya, submarines took up positions to intercept enemy ships.

By 1943, the submarines had good sonar detection equipment, high surface speed, increased antiaircraft armament and very effective acoustic homing torpedoes. When aircraft appeared, the subs did not always dive; sometimes, they repelled the attacks with AAA fire. When they encountered submarines, they attacked them with the homing torpedoes. The submarine fight grew tenser; there was an improvement in antisubmarine force organization and tactics.

In the North, German submarine groups had been pursuing convoys and damaging them for a long time. In 1943, they were able to sink four transports in the Kara Sea with very important cargo for the Noril'sk Industrial Combine, as well as three minesweepers and two auxiliary vessels. In light of the increased submarine threat and the inadequate antisubmarine forces, the NDC [National Defense Committee] took a number of steps; specifically, it issued instructions to withdraw the icebreakers required to insure navigation in the White Sea from the Arctic when the navigation season ended there and to leave 15 transports in the Arctic for the winter.<sup>4</sup> This was one of the tense periods in the fight against submarines when the Northern Fleet was just beginning to be reinforced with more modern ASW ships and aircraft and when over 20 German submarines--whose crews had gained experience in controlling shipping in the Atlantic--were operating in the Northern Fleet's area.



By 1944, the Novaya Zemlya Naval Base defenses had been strengthened with observation-equipped ASW ships and minesweepers. A Lane Defense, consisting of 13 ships, was established for Vaygach Island. The 54th Composite Air Regiment (35 aircraft) operated in the strait areas.<sup>5</sup> However, it was not possible to cut off enemy submarine access to the Kara Sea since there was a wide, deepwater area between Novaya Zemlya and the Arctic ice, an area which the submarines used for passage.<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, enemy submarines began to take a lot longer to penetrate to the Kara Sea and they began to operate more cautiously.

During the war, maneuverable antisubmarine forces--ships and especially aircraft--began to be used more within the antisubmarine barrier system. This reduced the time for setting up barriers and also accelerated their curtailment when the situation changed.

Fleet experience in establishing various force compositions for antisubmarine barriers and positions has not been studied enough unfortunately; but, the feasibility of this method of submarine control is beyond doubt.

#### Naval Base Antisubmarine Warfare

The most aggressive fight against submarines throughout the entire war was waged by naval base forces in their areas. Naval forces, called Harbor Defense, conducted ASW near bases in conjunction with ASW aircraft and using static detection equipment and barriers. This defense was based on day-to-day activities in keeping enemy submarines away from bases and ports, destroying or chasing away detected subs and, finally, close escorts for vessels and ships during transit.

Theater-wide submarine observation was conducted by fleet signals intelligence which accounted for three-fourths of all contacts. Near each base, observation was conducted by Signal Service (SS) posts. In addition, observations were made by shore artillery batteries, ships and aircraft which had other combat missions. However, picket ships (craft) were the most reliable means of protecting bases and waterways. They were concentrated in submarine operating areas and they maneuvered in probable submarine lanes.

During the first weeks of the war, aircraft and ships conducted a daily search of the waters near base; but, this led to overexerted effort. Then, a search was conducted either after submarines were detected by other facilities or before the departure from (return to) base by convoys and ship units.

In 1943, enemy submarines were equipped with more modern sonars, radars and homing torpedoes which were a threat to ASW ships. To avoid their own destruction, surface ships had to detect a submarine before it closed to firing distance. This speeded up technical reequipping of ASW ships and brought about changes in ASW organization.

The Northern Fleet grew quickly and was supplied with tactical equipment. During the war, the fleet received 81 sonars and 61 radars.<sup>8</sup> The number of ASW ships increased fivefold while there was a sevenfold increase in their depth charges and a ninefold increase in sonars.

As a rule, beginning in 1944, two ASW patrol boats were sent on patrol; they carried out an active search for submarines in their area. Usually, two subchasers (large or small) and two torpedo boats--which arrived in the submarine contact area at the patrol's request and which were called hunter-killer (HUK) groups--were assigned to assist them. At the beginning of the war, ASW was strengthened by increasing the number of ships and aircraft; toward the end of the war, it was strengthened by the appearance of new, technologically improved ASW elements.

It was mandatory for all ships and aircraft which were accomplishing convoy or other operational missions at sea to search for and destroy submarines. Each departure to rendezvous with a convoy, to return with one or to escort one was turned into a sweep for submarines in the waterways or coastal area. For example, while escorting a convoy to the White Sea and returning to the Kola Bay, the Deyatel'nyy (Capt 3rd Rank P. M. Gonchar, captain) and the Zhivuchiy (Capt 3rd Rank N. D. Ryabchenko, captain) destroyers made contact with an enemy submarine and attacked it with depth charges. As a result of the attack, oil and other objects testifying to the submarine's damage appeared on the surface.<sup>9</sup>

The fleet headquarters attempted to keep the new antisubmarine forces under its direct supervision and, depending upon the situation, it concentrated them near a naval base. For example, during the Arctic navigation season, Northern Fleet antisubmarine forces were concentrated at the Novaya Zemlya and at the Kara Naval Bases. Beginning at the end of 1944, ASW ships and aircraft were concentrated on the approaches to the Kola Peninsula. At the base headquarters, special commissioned ASW operators put together the data on submarines. The fleet headquarters was striving for a situation where detected submarines were acted upon and forced to leave their positions.

Close-in defense of ports, harbors and berths against submarine penetration required a great deal of fleet effort. By the Fall of 1941, the Kola Gulf and several ports were protected by antisubmarine nets and booms. Combined with the SS, artillery batteries and pickets, these barriers provided completely reliable protection for berths against enemy submarine penetrations.

The reliability of base and port defense increased after radars and sonars--which expanded the area being monitored--were set up on approaches. The barrier line was also extended further to sea and mines were used on a more widespread basis. There was also a trend toward increasing the scope of guarded base waterways and this specifically made it easier to support the arrival (departure) of convoys which were organized (broken down) within the defended area.

## Antisubmarine Defense for Convoys

The protection of shipping through the establishment of ASW stations and reliable base area ASW played an important role. However, the primary method of protecting sea lanes was escorting convoys. Foreign convoy security between Iceland (England) and the USSR's northern ports was part of the overall Allied fight against German submarines. At first, Northern Fleet participation in Allied convoy security consisted of an increase in reconnaissance and all types of defense (primarily air defense and ASW) in its area; later, its participation developed into the specific operation of piloting convoys (arriving and departing) and the main body of the fleet took part in this.

Piloting icebreakers and transports into and out of the Arctic at the end of the navigation season was the most dangerous time since the ships were subject to submarine attacks in the eastern part of the theater of war which was the furthest from the primary bases. The White Sea Naval Flotilla piloted vessels in (out) as part of a special convoy operation. While these operations were being conducted, the flotilla was reinforced with ships and aircraft (in 1944 two-thirds of the Northern Fleet's combat-capable forces were allocated for this). During an operation, convoys were piloted in succession (up to 10 convoys) through the most dangerous area (from the Novaya Zemlya Straits to the White Sea). Moreover, they were able to pilot ships into the Arctic when the enemy did not expect it (usually in June) and, therefore, there was insignificant opposition from him. But, they had to pilot them out in October under large-scale enemy opposition. The art of conducting these operations consisted of the ASW and minesweeping forces gaining surprise or maneuverability enroute depending on the situation.

To protect the ships' entry into and exit from ports, the close-in base patrols were increased ahead of time and ships and aircraft conducted a sweep for submarines. The sweep area fluctuated within a 7-15 mile radius from the base.

The escort ships basically did not give the submarines an opportunity to observe them through their periscopes or to use their underwater ordnance or torpedoes. Moreover, they periodically dropped depth charges to drive the subs deeper. At the end of the engagement, they stopped the "preventive" depth charges to keep from attracting enemy submarines to the convoy. The number of escort ships assigned was based on an estimate for establishing a dense sonar observation zone. Detected submarines were targets for HUK groups drawn from the convoy escort or the nearest naval base.

Thus, the improvement of ASW for shipping proceeded at first by increasing the number of escort ships and by tightening defense; after the introduction of new technology, it was improved by detailing HUK groups which were not strictly tied to the ships being escorted and were able to search a wider area along the convoy's route. There was a trend away from protecting convoys to protecting sea lanes.

## The Destruction of Submarines

The search for and destruction of submarines at sea were the most active types of ASW. Aircraft were frequently used to sweep the area around a base or a convoy route; they swept the assigned waterway in pairs. In 1941, there were isolated cases of contacts with surface subs.<sup>10</sup> Although the aircraft attacks did not destroy the enemy, they significantly impeded his actions.

An on-call search was executed by surface groups based on data from signals intelligence, convoys or other forces which had detected submarines at sea.

Submarine attacks by surface ships using detection equipment were effective. But, unfortunately, after receiving one to two reports on the target's movements and afraid of losing contact with the submarine, surface ship captains sometimes attacked prematurely and the depth charges were not successful.

They were rarely able to get a follow-on fix on the submarine's location. The Northern Fleet obtained good results when searching under poor visibility by making simultaneous use of radar and sonar. The best results were obtained by ships which alternated sonar operations in the echo and passive modes. For example, on the night of 9 December 1944, the Razumnyy (Capt 2nd Rank Ye. A. Kozlov, captain) and the Zhivuchiy (Capt 3rd Rank N. D. Ryabchenko, captain) destroyers established sonar contact with a submarine and attacked it with a depth charge pattern after marking the attack location with a signal cartridge. Taking their bearings on it, the destroyers reestablished contact with the enemy and made two more attacks on the sub. Wooden articles and a cork popped to the surface; they were evidence of the sub's destruction.<sup>11</sup>

Coordination between ships and aircraft while searching for or attacking submarines was initiated by information on a target contact. Beginning in 1942, it was the practice to call each other to the submarine contact area to continue the chase. However, the ships arrived in the area 2 - 3 hours after the contact when the aircraft were already gone. When the ships called, the aircraft arrived faster but it was still after contact with the submarine was broken. Sometimes, the aircraft dropped bombs on the sub's approximate location as designated by the ships. At the end of the war, permanent HUK groups and ASW air squadrons had been formed. It was very important for them to work out options for joint operations, in advance, together.

On the open sea, submarines were destroyed by surface ships, primarily destroyers. They attacked the enemy both during special-purpose sweeps and while escorting convoys. For example, the Gremyashchiy destroyed the fascist U-585 submarine on 30 March 1942; the Derzkiy destroyed the U-344 on 22 August 1944; the Zhivuchiy destroyed the U-387 on 8 December 1944; and the Karl Liebknecht destroyed the U-236 on 22 April 1945.



Thus, the fight with enemy submarines in the North was intense; this clearly established the enormous importance of external and internal sea lanes and the large number of fascist submarines used to interdict them. In 1943, the fleet's primary mission was fighting enemy submarines.

The theory and practice of fighting submarines received significant contributions from Adm A. G. Golovko, commander Northern Fleet; Vice Adm V. I. Platonov, fleet chief-of-staff; Rear Adm V. P. Karpunin, submarine navigation officer; Capt 1st Rank A. Z. Shmelev, destroyer escort brigade commander; Capt 1st Rank M. S. Klevenskiy, submarine chaser brigade commander; Capts 3rd Rank I. N. Gritsuk, S. D. Zyuzin and others, submarine chaser division commanders; Lt Cols V. N. Vasil'nev, N. G. Pavlov and S. K. Litvinov, aviators who commanded the 118th Air Reconnaissance Regiment at various times. In their duels with enemy submarines, the victors were the crews of the destroyers commanded by Capts 3rd Rank A. I. Gurin, N. C. Ryabchenko, A. I. Andreyev and K. D. Staritsyn; the crew of submarine S-101 commanded by Capt P. I. Yegorov; and the crew of Capt-Lt V. A. Babanov's T-116 minesweeper.

The antisubmarine forces tactics were based on the principle of depriving the submarines of the initiative and of not leaving any areas for them to operate in with impunity. Experience showed that a successful fight could only be waged against submarines by special purpose antisubmarine forces supplied with good technology. The number one problem was still detecting a submerged sub.

#### FOOTNOTES

1. The largest number of the Soviet Navy's ASW positions were set up in the Baltic Sea: at the mouth of the Gulf of Finland and in the Irben Straits in 1941; between Tallinn and Porkkala-Udd, at the mouth of the Gulf of Finland and at the entrance to the Gulf of Bothnia in 1944.
2. Central Naval Archives, f. 11, d. 17814, kn. 4, ll. 63-67; inv. No 4419, p 124.
3. Ibid., d. 35528, l. 109, 110.
4. "Boyevoy put' Sovetskogo Voenno-Morskogo Flota," (The Soviet Navy's Combat Record), Voenizdat, 1974, pp 211-212.
5. Central Naval Archives, f. 12, d. 36019, l. 23; f. 259, d. 16739, l. 4.
6. On 7 August 1943, the Soviet S-101 submarine torpedoed and sank the German U-639 submarine at this position.

8. [sic] Central Naval Archives, f. 11, d. 17814, kn. 1, l. 360, 365.
9. Ibid., f. 254, d. 23129, l. 120.
10. Ibid., f. 6371, l. 8.
11. Ibid., f. 25, d. 23129, l. 121.

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## WARTIME OPERATIONS: RIFLE REGIMENT ATTACK ON DIFFICULT TERRAIN

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No. 1, May 80 signed to press 22 Apr 80 pp 54-57

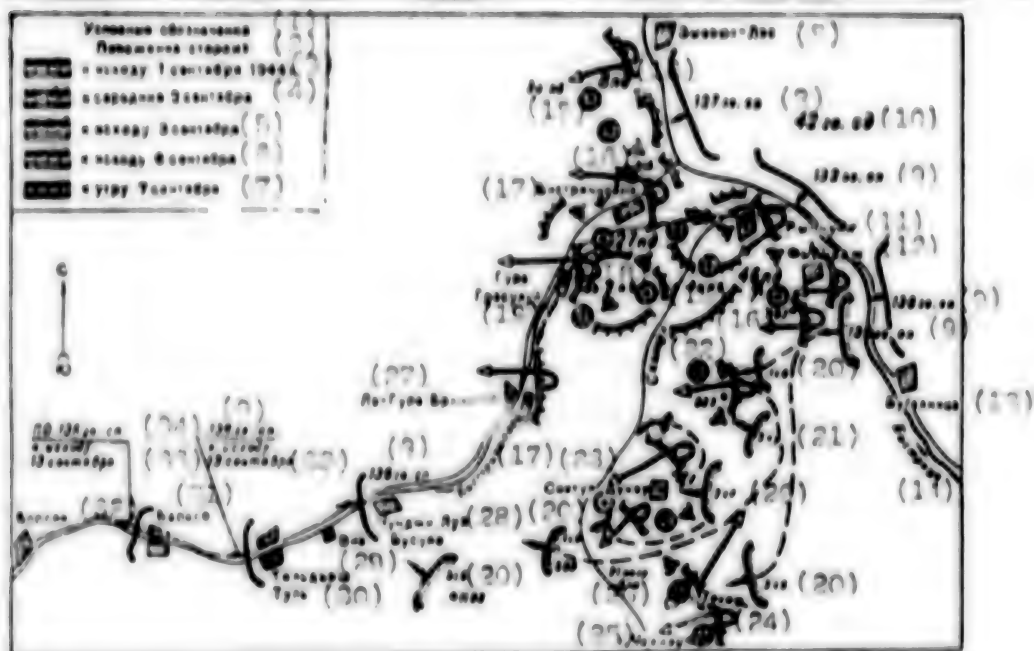
[Article published under the heading "Skill and Heroism," by Col R. Frolov: "The 136th Guards Rifle Regiment's Attack in Mountainous, Wooded Terrain"]

[Text] By the end of 1 September 1944, while pursuing isolated units of the 8th, 27th, and 46th Infantry Divisions of the enemy's 8th Army after a successful breakthrough of his defense in the foothills of the Eastern Carpathians, the 42nd Guards Rifle Division (GRD) (Maj Gen F. A. Bobrov, commander) arrived at the eastern bank of the Bistrita on a line (Zyvoyul-Les), Bugalnita (Romania).

The terrain in the formation's zone of operations was typical of the Carpathians--wooded and mountainous, with isolated hills and valleys through which small mountain rivers flowed. The only highway was in the southwest; to cover it and also to keep our forces from breaking through the Eastern Carpathians at this spot, the Germans had prepared a major center of resistance in the area of Bistrisoara, Gura Grasului, (Rypchuni). It consisted of a system of strong points with a 360 degree defense; they were established in built-up areas and on commanding heights. The gaps between the strong points were protected by barbed wire entanglements and, in isolated areas, by trenches connected by crawl trenches, too. On the heights adjacent to the road, there were gun and machinegun emplacements. The mountaintops in the distance were also prepared for defense; the few paths leading to them were covered by fire.

Upon arriving at the Bistrita River, the 42nd GRD was to break through the enemy's defense in a sector bounded by (Zyvoyul-Les), Bugalnita and to subsequently continue the attack in the general direction of Bistrisoara, Baraso, Borsac.

At dawn on 2 September, after a brief artillery strike, the first to make a forced crossing of the Bistrita near (Rypchuni) was the 132nd Guards Rifle Regiment (GRR) which was delivering the main thrust. It was to destroy the enemy in strong points (Rypchuni), Bistrisoara, Gura Grasului



The 136th GRR 2-8 September 1944 Attack in the Carpathians

Key:

- |                                 |                                   |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1) legend                       | 18) up to two infantry battalions |
| 2) sides position               | 19) Gura Grasului                 |
| 3) by the end of 1 Sep 1944     | 20) Rifle Battalion               |
| 4) by midday on 2 Sep           | 21) Rifle Company                 |
| 5) by the end of 3 Sep          | 22) Scitul                        |
| 6) by the end of 6 Sep          | 23) Scitul Ducau                  |
| 7) by the morning of 7 Sep      | 24) Toka Hill                     |
| 8) (Zyvoyul-Les)                | 25) Chahleu Hill                  |
| 9) Guards Rifle Regiment        | 26) 21st Border Guards Battalion  |
| 10) Guards Rifle Division       | 27) La-Gura Bradului              |
| 11) (Rypchuni)                  | 28) (Chundji Lui Busuye)          |
| 12) (Fyrtadj)                   | 29) Via                           |
| 13) Bugalnita                   | 30) Teldes Toul                   |
| 14) Bistrita                    | 31) Baraso                        |
| 15) up to an infantry battalion | 32) Borsec                        |
| 16) Infantry Division           | 33) by the end of 13 Sep          |
| 17) Bistrisoara                 | 34) 136th GRR advance guard       |

(where up to 2 infantry battalions of the 27th Infantry Division were on the defensive) and develop the attack along the highway. The 127th GRR was advancing on the right and the 136th GRR was advancing on the left. Upon approaching the northeastern outskirts of (Rypchuni) 132nd GRR units came under heavy artillery, small arms and machinegun fire from the fascists in the Bistrisoara, Fyrtadj and (Rypchuni) area; the units took heavy



losses and hit the ground. The subsequent battle showed that a significant part of the enemy firing positions were not destroyed during our artillery strike. Despite the infantry's insignificant advance, the majority of the close support guns were straggling behind the rifle units they were supposed to advance with. With a simultaneous battalion-size attack from Bistrisoara and (Rypchuni), Hitler's forces drove the 132nd GRR back to its initial position. Throughout the day, the regiment made numerous attempts to take (Rypchuni); but each time it was forced to withdraw under heavy enemy artillery and machinegun fire from the strong points. The 127th GRR attacks also failed; they were not able to break the resistance from the 8th Infantry Division's infantry battalion. The reason was that intelligence was not able to completely clarify the nature of the enemy's defense or his forces in the strong points. The result was that Hitler's forces' disciplined fire disrupted our regiments' advance. The fighting became drawn out. It was clear that an advance along the highway would not have the desired results and could lead to unwarranted losses. The division commander decided to bypass the strong points on the left with a flanking maneuver by the 136th GRR, come out in the enemy's rear and destroy him with simultaneous attacks from the front and rear.

The 136th GRR (Maj G. S. Istomin, commander), reinforced by an artillery battalion and a division field engineer company, received the mission of breaking through the enemy's defense in the sector bounded by (Fyrtadj), Bugalnita and, while developing the attack in the direction of Scitul Ducau, seize that populated area and emerge at the Bistrisoara River near (Chundji Lui Busuyo) cutting off Hitler's forces withdrawal from the strong points. Subsequently, it had to advance along the highway in a south-westerly direction and seize Teldes Toul by the end of 13 September. The advance guard would have to dislodge Hitler's forces from Baraso.<sup>2</sup>

Thus, the 136th GRR would have to advance on its own through an isolated, barely accessible mountainous sector while the adjacent unit on the right's mission--the 132nd GRR--was to renew the attack only after the 136th GRR broke through to the enemy's rear and while there was no adjacent unit on the left at all.

On the morning of 2 September, after a brief artillery strike against infantry battalion dispositions of the 46th Infantry Division defending (Fyrtadj), the 136th GRR made a swift forced crossing of the Bistrita and, bypassing the (Fyrtadj) built-up area on the left, began to carry out its combat mission. Crossing the steep grades and dense forests, carrying their ammunition, machineguns and mortars with them, regimental units slowly advanced along the mountain paths. Repelling the enemy's weak screens on the hills, the regiment broke out to Hill 803 by midday and, after destroying a company of Hitler's forces in a brief battle, seized it.

Waging fierce fighting, regimental units took individual hills one after the other and, by the end of 3 September, they reached the line Hill 883's

eastern slopes, 2.5 km southeast of Scitul Ducau. By this time, the line Hill 883, Scitul Ducau was being held by the 21st Border Guard Battalion, supported by enemy artillery, 5 mortar batteries and 20 heavy machineguns.<sup>3</sup>

With the 136th GRR's arrival in this area, the enemy garrison on Hill Chahleu, fearing an encirclement, hastily undertook a withdrawal toward Scitul Ducau.

Throughout the night and during the day of 4 September, enemy company to battalion-level forces made several counterattacks to dislodge the 136th GRR units from the line they occupied. With friendly artillery and small arms fire, the regiment successfully beat them back and inflicted heavy damage on the enemy. During 3-5 September, the Guardsmen made several attacks to take Hill 883 and Scitul Ducau but, each time, heavy enemy fire forced them back to their initial position.

Our men's failure in these battles was due to the fact that they had to advance in a difficult roadless, mountainous environment. For the most part, the infantry operated with just battalion artillery support since the regimental and division artillery units were straggling a long way behind. By this time, the 127th and 132nd GRR's still held their former lines and had had no results. The intense fire combined with the obstacle belt made it impossible to penetrate the defense from the front, along the (Rypchuni)-Borsec Highway. The initial success gained by the 136th GRR was also negated by the stubborn defense of Hitler's forces at Hill 883 and the Scitul Ducau strong point whose garrison had been reinforced by the units which withdrew from Chahleu Hill.

Under these conditions, the division commander personally went to the 136th GRR location. After studying the enemy and assessing the situation, he made the following decision: one rifle company would cover the southeast slopes of Hill 883, one rifle battalion would continue the fight for Scitul Ducau and the remaining forces of the 136th GRR would bypass it from the southeast, seize Hills 899 and 1198 and proceed along a mountain pass to the (Chundji Lui Busuyo) built-up area, thereby cutting off the withdrawal of Hitler's forces which were defending against the 127th and 132nd GRR's; then, the defending forces would be destroyed by simultaneous attacks from the front and rear.<sup>4</sup>

In accordance with this decision, the regimental commander assigned the following combat missions to his units: the 5th Rifle Company will seal off the enemy on Hill 883 and destroy him. The 2nd Rifle Battalion will continue its advance to Scitul Ducau from the front and seal off its garrison. The 1st Rifle Battalion will take Hill 899 and subsequently advance in the direction of (Chundji Lui Busuyo). The 3rd Rifle Battalion will destroy Hitler's forces on Hill 1198 and then advance in the direction of (Chundji Lui Busuyo).

At dawn on 6 September, the 5th Rifle Company (Lt Ye. M. Kaluzhskikh, commander), which was left on the southeast slopes of Hill 883, engaged the enemy in a firefight and distracted his attention from the operational sector for the main body of the regiment's forces.

At that time, while overcoming the enemy's opposition, the 136th GRR's 1st and 3rd Rifle Battalions began to advance slowly in small groups in a westerly direction. By the end of 6 September, they were able to seize Hills 899 and 1198. Seeing that the Germans were concentrating their entire attention on the 5th Rifle Company which was engaged in a firefight for Hill 883, the 2nd Rifle Battalion Commander, Sr Lt M. A. Selemenev, decided to take this opportunity and use the remaining forces of his battalion to seize Scitul Ducau. After all, up to now, the 3-day frontal attack had not been successful and the battalion CO considered enveloping the built-up area and taking it with simultaneous attacks from three sides. He ordered the rifle platoon commanded by Jr Lt Ye. M. Kraynov to go to the northeast of Scitul Ducau and the rifle platoon headed by Jr Lt I. I. Shatov to go to the northeast while the reconnaissance team would cut the path on the eastern edge of the woods west of the built-up area. The remaining forces would attack Scitul Ducau from the front.

The decision was a correct one, but the flanking maneuver along the mountainous slopes was fraught with a great deal of difficulty. Carrying their weapons and ammunition and using ropes, the flanking units clambered up the slopes, vertical dropoffs and down the steep descents. At the risk of falling into a precipice at any minute and ready to come to each other's assistance at any time, they skirted the strong point in the assigned directions and, by 2400 hours on 6 September, they took up their jumpoff positions for the attack. At the commander's signal, the battalion units simultaneously attacked Scitul Ducau from the north, east and southwest. The enemy did not expect such a daring attack by the Guardsmen. He was taken by surprise and was not able to put up any significant resistance this time. After penetrating the built-up area, the Soviet fighting men routed approximately two of the 21st Border Guards Battalion's companies.

Many fighting men distinguished themselves in the fighting for Scitul Ducau. Jr Lt V. I. Kositsyn's heavy machinegun platoon was the first to break into the built-up area and, with its unexpected attack, it destroyed about 25 of Hitler's men. In their assault on Scitul Ducau, the men of the antitank gun platoon commanded by Lt I. G. Nesterenko destroyed 15 firing positions and about 20 soldiers. A gunner of the 2nd Antitank Gun Company, Pvt N. R. Slobodenyuk, destroyed a light machinegun and four German soldiers in the night fighting and this guaranteed his unit's advance.<sup>5</sup>

Having lost Scitul Ducau, the enemy defending Hill 883 was threatened by an encirclement. Seeing that the 2nd Rifle Battalion could cut the only path leading from the hill in a westerly direction at any time, the fascists began to withdraw in small groups toward the Scitul River. The 5th Rifle Company commander, Lt Ye. M. Kaluzhskikh, decided to attack Hitler's

forces immediately from the front and seize the hill. After breaking into the first trench, the men began to swiftly spread out along it and the crawl trenches, wiping out isolated pockets of resistance. Exploiting their success, the men of the 1st and 3rd Battalions arrived at the Bistrisioara River near Chundji Lui Busuyo by the morning of 7 September, took the built-up area on the run and began to advance along the river in a southwesterly direction.

With the fall of Scitul Ducau and the arrival of the 136th GRR at (Chundji Lui Busuyo), the enemy defending the Bistrisioara, Gura Grasului, (Rypchuni) area, fearing an encirclement, was forced to surrender his strongly fortified area without a fight and began to withdraw to the mountains in a westerly direction, discarding his equipment and weapons along the road. The 136th GRR had successfully accomplished its assigned combat mission.

The 42nd GRD's offensive battles show the difficult missions which commanders at all levels will have to accomplish when preparing to attack and attacking in mountains. The enemy's strong defense, the lack of experience in mountain fighting and a number of deficiencies in organizing battle had a significant effect on the results. The mountain combat experience has firmly established the requirement for thoroughly preparing for the attack and for skillfully maneuvering forces.

The division's men, and especially the 136th GRR, demonstrated the ability to conduct combat operations without roads, to make widespread use of flanking movements and envelopments to seize dominant heights, passes, mountain passes and hold them, and although they did not receive any special training for mountain combat, they nevertheless quickly learned to lay paths, correctly estimate distances and fire accurately at significant sight angles.

#### FOOTNOTES

1. The 42nd GRD consisted of the 127th, 132nd, 136th GRR and the 95th Guards Artillery Regiment, the 45th Guards Independent Tank Destroyer Battalion and special-purpose units. At the time of the account, it was part of the 51st Rifle Corps, 40th Army, 2nd Ukrainian Front.
2. USSR Defense Ministry Central Archives, f. 1076, op. 831910, d. 1, ll. 6-7.
3. Ibid., f. 1141, op. 3, d. 1, l. 11.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., f. 136 GRR, op. 690306, d. 1396, ll. 329, 343; op. 678701, d. 1, l. 170.

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#### WARTIME OPERATIONS: CAPTURE OF THE REICHSTAG DESCRIBED

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22 Apr 80 pp 58-64

[Conclusion of two-part article, published under the heading "Memoirs," by  
RSU Col (Ret) F. Zinchenko, first commandant of the Reichstag: "Victory  
Banner Over the Reichstag" \*]

[Text] By 1100 hours on 29 April, the entire 1st Battalion headed by Bn CO  
Capt Neustroyev was fighting in several buildings after they crossed the  
bridge. By evening, the men had broken through to "Himmler's home" and  
Neustroyev transferred his command post (CP) there. Soon afterwards, the  
sun set and it began to get dark. At that moment, the telephone began to  
ring.

"Comrade Colonel," I heard Neustroyev's excited, happy voice, "I see the  
Reichstag!"

We immediately headed for the 1st Battalion's CP. We had just entered the  
basement room when Stepan Andreyevich took me by the arm, led me to the  
window and showed me a large gray building.

"There it is! The Reichstag!" the Bn CO exclaimed.

I looked at it. There was no doubt—this was really the Reichstag. In the  
twilight, we had a good view of the large, gloomy, ponderous domed building  
which we had seen many times in pictures. The Reichstag was in front of us.  
It is hard now to communicate our joy. The words of the regimental infor-  
mation officer, Capt Aleksandr Matveyevich Prelov, reached me:

"We finally made it! This is the end for the fascists!"

I reported to the division CO that the regiment was fighting in "Himmler's  
home," that we were at the 1st Battalion's CP and that I saw the Reichstag.

\*Conclusion. See VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL No 4, 1980 for the beginning.

"OK, I will report up the line that your regiment has arrived at the Reichstag."

After a moment of silence, the division CO added:

"The adjacent regiment will cross the bridge soon and begin fighting for 'Himmler's home.' What would be the best way to commit Plekhodanov's regiment, to the left or to the right of your regiment?"

"We are presently clearing the northeast part of the building. Let Plekhodanov take the southeast part. That would be to the right."

"I concur. Plekhodanov will visit you; fill him in on the situation," the general concluded.

The day of 30 April was a special one for us although it began like all the other days in Berlin, with the thunder of guns, the explosion of shells and mines and the smoke from fires. We were anxiously waiting for morning but it seemed like it was very slow in coming. Finally, dawn broke. Now, in the light of day, we could make out the large gray building better; it was about 400 meters away. The large columns of the main entrance; the windowless, steel-girdered dome; the bricked-up windows with small openings left (the fascists were using them for firing slits); the open front door. The front of the building was badly chipped by bomb and shell fragments. It was defended by a garrison of more than 900 fascists, as we later found out.

We learned from an elderly German that, in addition to the main hall where the Bundestag met, the building had a lot of small halls and over 500 rooms. This German sketched us a diagram of the German Parliament's internal layout, almost without mistake as we later confirmed.

The square in front of the Reichstag was pitted by bombs and shells; charred stumps of trees from the recently beautiful Tiergarten Park were lying all around. There were also a lot of tanks which were knocked out of action, burned vehicle hulls and mutilated guns. In front of the building itself, there were two trenches connected together, and to the Reichstag, by crawl trenches.

This area contained dug-in tanks and reinforced concrete machinegun pillboxes. At the southern edge of the Tiergarten, the fascists had placed 18 antiaircraft guns which were modified to fire against ground targets. To the left to the Reichstag, in the Embassy Quarter, there were also dug-in tanks and self-propelled guns. All of these weapons were covering the approaches to the Reichstag. There was a large ditch 300 meters to the west of the Reichstag; the regiment's battalions (except for the 1st Company; it was in my reserve) had taken their starting positions for the assault on the Reichstag behind the embankment.

The division CO designated 1300 hours for the first attack. Arty preparation would begin a half hour earlier. Our regiment and LtCol A. D. Plekhodanov's 674th Regiment were to attack the central part of the building and break into it through the front door. The 380th Rifle Regiment was to attack the building from the north side. The division CO assigned our regiment a special mission—raising the red banner on the Reichstag's dome.

The Bn Co's, artillery officers and tankers gathered at the regimental CP. The 674th Rifle Regiment commander, LtCol Aleksey Dmitriyevich Plekhodanov, came too. Also there were the 328th Artillery Regiment commander, LtCol Georgiy Grigor'yevich Gladkikh, and the 23rd Independent Tank Brigade deputy commander, LtCol Mikhail Vasil'yevich Morozov. As the senior ranking officer, I took the job of effecting coordination among the units and of commanding the assault. We decided to form a deeper formation to intensify the attack. Our regiment's 1st Battalion was in the first echelon and Capt V. I. Davydov's 2nd Battalion, 674th Regiment behind it. Klimenkov's battalion took up a position on the regiment's left flank and its mission was to repel possible enemy counterattacks and be ready to exploit the success of the first battalions breaking into the Reichstag.

We had just finished making our arrangements for the assault on the Reichstag when my political officer, LtCol Ivan Yefimovich Yefimov, and the division political section instructor, Capt Il'ya Ustinovich Na veyev, appeared at the regimental CP. They brought the banner given us by the army war council to raise over the Reichstag. It was uncovered and unfurled so that everybody present at the CP could see it. I directed a few words to those present. I said that giving the banner to the regiment was a high evaluation of its men's combat services, courage and heroism and also a great trust which we had to justify at all costs.

By then, preparations for the assault were in full swing. The tanks were arriving and taking up their firing positions. The guns were set for direct fire. Ammunition was being transported and carried up.

Under the leadership of LtCol Yefimov, the party political staff also expanded its aggressive work among unit personnel. Each man was informed of the mission. Commanders and political officers explained the special features of the pending street fighting to the men. The communists and Komsomol members held discussions and told the reinforcements about the art of fighting in the city; they introduced them to the procedures for using hand grenades while emphasizing that they were irreplaceable for fighting in city streets and buildings. The instructive pamphlet "Combat in a Built-up Area" was read in each section.

Before the assault on the Reichstag itself, a number of companies held party meetings. They oriented the communists toward successful accomplishment of a difficult mission. The decisions were brief—the communists should be in the lead; they should inspire the men with their example.

I would like to say a few words about my political officer. Ivan Yefimovich Yefimov was the son of a railroad man. As a lad, he took part in the revolutionary events in Petrograd, attended the severe schooling of the Civil War and worked as a rayon party committee secretary. Short, stocky, with large expressive eyes, calm and cool, he attracted people with his efficiency, in-depth knowledge and understanding. As the saying goes, there was enough of him to go around. Without exaggeration, he was the regiment's moving spirit.

At approximately 1000 hours on 30 April, I ordered the regiment's officer-in-charge of reconnaissance, Capt Vasilii Ivanovich Kondrashov, to designate two scouts who could be trusted to raise the banner we had received from the army war council over the Reichstag. Several minutes later, the scouts were standing in front of me. There were not 2 of them but...about 20: Belousov, Yegorov, Ivanov, Kantariya, Parchevskiy, Konovalenko, K. Krinevich, I. Krinevich, Oleynik, Pal'chikov, Mogilka, 3 Saviches—Nikolay, Yakim and Pavel—and others. Almost all of them were Komsomol members. In surprise and even somewhat angrily, I glanced at Kondrashov. Did he really not understand the order I had given? Understanding my glance, Kondrashov looked back and forth from me to the scouts for a long time with the expression of a man who had an unsolvable problem. Then, with a sigh of regret he looked over his brave eagles again and resolutely ordered:

"Yegorov and Kantariya, report to the regimental commander!"

I called both of them to the window.

"Do you see that large gray building over there?"

"Yes sir, Comrade Colonel.

"That is the Reichstag. Your mission is to put the red banner on its dome. You will operate with the 1st Rifle Battalion's formations, in the 1st Rifle Company which is now in reserve. During the artillery preparation, it will advance to the ditch and attack with the battalion's other companies."

I gave the scouts the banner and warned Capt Kondrashov that it would be his head if it was not raised. If anything happened to M. A. Yegorov and M. V. Kantariya, then he would have to do it himself or assign other scouts. Vasilii Ivanovich said that he understood the mission, took all the scouts and left for the 1st Battalion.

By 1300 hours, the preparations for the assault were basically finished. We had set 89 guns, about 30 tanks, 6 SU-122 ~~m~~ self-propelled guns for direct fire. The beginning of the assault was only a few minutes away. Everybody took their places and waited for the command; they waited impatiently, glancing at their watches. I had frequently observed people during those last, anxious minutes before a battle. And, they always behaved differently. Some withdrew into themselves; others, conversely, joked with their friends; still others did not seem to be thinking about anything, as though nothing



lay in store for them; and others finished writing letters. This was natural. The few minutes before a battle were the last for many and each person behaved according to his own nature.

Now, everybody was doing his job. The regimental artillery officer, Maj Ivan Alekseyevich Krymov, was looking attentively at the Reichstag and making some notes on his map. The regimental chief of staff, Maj Artemiy Grigor'yevich Kazakov, was giving his subordinates last minute instructions....

At 1300 hours, the ground shook and heaved. The Reichstag, the Embassy Quarter and the Brandenburg Gate were covered with smoke and dust. The ground was strewn with broken rocks and bricks. Under cover of the fire, S'yanov's company left the basement of "Himmler's home" and dashed to the ditch. Capt Kondrashov led his scouts behind them. Among them were Yegorov and Kantariya.

By the beginning of the attack, the 1st Battalion was completely massed in a line with the ditch embankment. A total of 300m remained to the Reichstag. These were the last and most difficult meters of the war.

At 1330 hours, a series of green flares flew up into the sky—the signal to attack. The battalion adjutant, SrLt Gusev, who had replaced the downed Capt Neustroyev, gave the command "Attack" and was the first to rush forward. Behind him was the company commanded by S'yanov. However, they were not immediately able to reach the desired objective. After just 40–50m, the battalion was forced to hit the dirt. Intense fire rained down on them. A new attempt was also unsuccessful: we did not advance a single meter.

At 1500 hours, about 15 tanks and self-propelled guns appeared from the area of the Embassy Quarter; they opened heavy fire on the regiment's positions. Hitler's forces had decided to counterattack. They were walking straight up, in two lines of 500 men each. They were drunk, their faces were distorted, their collars were unbuttoned and they had cigars in their mouths. They were coming, disregarding our fire. They were senseless fanatics; they were walking into a sure and, most importantly, senseless death. What could be saved? Fascist Germany? Berlin? The Reichstag? No, nothing!

However, our situation was very difficult. The enemy was bringing a great deal of force to bear. But, neither the commanders nor the men wavered. The 4th Rifle Company (it was commanded by SrLt Nikolay Petrovich Pecherskikh, a communist) was partially encircled. Nevertheless, its men courageously fought off the enemy's furious counterattack.

Having taken large losses, Hitler's forces were forced to withdraw. The counterattack misfired.

We organized our units and prepared for a new attack. At 1750 hours, the Reichstag received a brief but heavy arty strike. The 1st Battalion went into the attack, busted into the first trench, and drove the enemy out of it. Without any delay, it rushed to the second trench and seized it with a fierce fight. SrLt Gusev set up rifle and machinegun fire against the

Reichstag windows and, under cover of the fire, S'yanov roused his company. It quickly leaped up the front steps of the Reichstag.

Through the binoculars, I had a good view of our men massing to the right and left of the front door. Actually, there remained only one obstacle in the way of the main objective. Cross it, and you're in the building. But, it was not that easy or simple to do. The enemy was ready. If they were not careful sticking their noses in, they would get a point blank round from a machinegun or automatic weapon. It was necessary to act carefully, intelligently and swiftly.

Then, the brave S'yanov rushed up to the door. Having noticed that the men were delaying, the commander decided to stimulate them.

"Well, come on, let's put the pressure on! Let's put the heat on the fascists! You, throw a grenade to the right; you, to the left; and you, straight ahead. Ready, throw!"

Inside, the grenades burst with a rumble, the fragments rattled and stone and plaster flew. S'yanov continued:

"Again, then. Give it to them again! Come on, lively now! We won't sleep in the street tonight!...Ready, throw!"

S'yanov himself was acting fearlessly along with his eagles, inspiring them with his words and deeds.

After a series of "pocket artillery" explosions, the enemy was silenced. Using this pause, Il'ya Yakovlevich S'yanov, now a Hero of the Soviet Union, commanded:

"Follow me! Forward! Don't lag behind! Everybody fire on the run!"

Communist S'yanov was the first to rush to the doors of the Reichstag, drawing his company behind him. The men were right behind their commander! Nikolay Byk, Ivan Bogdanov, Valentin Ostrovskiy, Ivan Prygunov and others.

The 2nd Company commanded by communist and JrLt Nikolay Alekseyevich Antonov and the 3rd Company headed by Lt Vsevolod Nikitovich Ishchuk burst into the Reichstag right behind the 1st Company. Now, it would not be so easy for the fascists to dislodge our units from the Reichstag. Soon afterward, Capt Vasily Innokent'yevich Davydov's battalion from the 674th Regiment entered the Reichstag. This was a strong force now!

So, we were in the Reichstag! The time was 1830 hours. I heard Ivan Yefimovich's triumphant voice:

"Fedor Matveyevich, look! Look! Our banner has reached the Reichstag!"

The binoculars gave me a good view of Kondrashov and his team of scouts, among whom were Yegorov and Kantariya, as they were rushing to the front door with the banner. Now, they were going up the steps and were hidden by the door. Ivan Yefimovich and I shook each others hand. It was time to report to the division CO. I picked up the telephone.

"Comrade general!" Suppressing my happy excitement, I tried to speak calmly. "Our men are in the Reichstag! And the war council's banner is there...."

"Congratulations!" the division CO responded, also happily.

We did not yet have any communications with the Reichstag. And, Hitler's forces were moving against us again. This time, they were counterattacking from the Brandenburg Gate and from the southern edge of the Tiergarten. There was about a regiment of them. The counterattacking force was supported by tanks and self-propelled guns. It was immediately clear that they wanted to cut us off from the Reichstag and wipe out the men who had broken in. The main thrust was against our adjacent unit, the 674th Regiment which was advancing to the right of us. Based on my telephone conversation with the commander, LtCol Plekhodanov, I understood that things were taking a turn for the worse. He requested assistance. From my CP, I could see the enemy trying to crush his formations. At that time, Capt K. Ya. Samsonov's battalion from the 380th Regiment broke into the Reichstag from the left and the threat of a counterattack by Hitler's forces receded.

I drew Klemenkov's 2nd Battalion from "Himmler's home" and rushed it to Plekhodanov's assistance. Our men dashed in to the attack. They went in standing straight up. Lines of SS troops were headed toward them. Both were proceeding firmly and decisively. At the regimental CP, we followed this duel of courage, bravery and strong nerves with a sinking heart.

"Will the SS really go into hand-to-hand combat?" muttered Krymov under his breath.

The distance between our line and the SS line was getting smaller. Just in case, I ordered the chief of staff, Maj Kazakov, to assemble everybody at the CP and be ready to lead them to the 2nd Battalion's assistance. However, the enemy did not engage in hand-to-hand fighting. About 150m from our line, his line began to break and disperse. Part of the soldiers hit the ground and opened fire; others turned back. To avoid unwarranted losses, the men of the 2nd Battalion also hit the ground. This was the last counterattack that day.

The hands of the clock were approaching 2000 hours and, with the division CO's permission, I decided to transfer my CP to the Reichstag. I requested artillery and tank fire against the Brandenburg Gate to the right and against the Embassy Quarter to the left. When part of the enemy's firing positions were suppressed and the dust had blinded him, we rushed to the Reichstag as fast as we could. I ran up the front porch and dove through the door. I was in a large oval vestibule; through another door and I was in the German

Parliament's meeting hall. The sky was visible through the dome overhead. I looked around: there were statues of German kings, statesmen and military leaders in the recesses in the walls; there were piles of garbage and pieces of furniture all around. There were a lot of our men in the hall.

The battalion adjutant, K. V. Gusev, and the battalion political officer, A. P. Berest, reported that their entire battalion and V. I. Davydov's entire battalion were in the building. Capt K. Ya. Samsonov's battalion had broken into the Reichstag from the north. Several rooms had been taken. I was approached by Capt Kandrashov with Yegorov and Kantariya who were holding the war council's banner.

"We are waiting for a suitable time," he said, "don't worry; we will carry out our mission."

"I believe you," I answered.

The regimental artillery officer, Maj Ivan Alekseyevich Krymov; the regiment's first assistant chief of staff, Capt Andrey Borisovich Logvinov; and the regimental engineer, Capt Vasilii Ivanovich Sherstnev, had arrived at the Reichstag with me. Later, the regiment's chief surgeon, Sergey Stepanovich Bogdanov, arrived. Without interfering, he and the nurses, Anya Fefelkina and Zinaida Khoruzhenko established an aid station. Along them were the radio operators, SrSgt Konstantin Mikhaylovich Volochayev and Vera Fedorovna Abramova; they immediately tapped into the net. Abramova called the division CO. I reported the situation to him.

"Comrade Zinchenko, I appoint you commandant of the Reichstag. You will receive written confirmation later," said the division CO. "Clear the enemy out of the building. Raise the banner over the Reichstag immediately and organize a guard for the valuable objects in it."

So, I was the first Soviet commandant of the Reichstag. When all the battalion commanders were assembled, I issued my first order as commandant: which floors and wings the battalions would clear the enemy out of. S'yanov's 1st Company recieved a special mission—clear a path to the roof of the Reichstag to raise the banner which Yegorov and Kantariya were carrying.

I knew that we would not clear the fascists out of the Reichstag today or during the night. Therefore, our primary objective at present was to take as many rooms as possible and, thereby, establish a wider frontage for the following day's fighting. I especially followed the progress of the 1st Company's actions. After they broke through to the second floor, S'yanov ordered platoons to fight their way to the roof and one to remain there for cover. Nobody knew where the entrance to the attic was. When they finally found it, it turned out that the fascists were buttoned up in the attic and there was no way to get into it. Our men fired their machineguns at the attic door; then, they made a human pyramid and trooper Mikhail Ivanovich Red'ko was the first to climb up it. As soon as he reached the entrance, they began to hand him grenades. Red'ko began throwing them at the fascists.



After he threw the last grenade, he swiftly raised himself up, burst into the attic, took cover behind the nearest beam and opened fire on the enemy. Several minutes later, Lebedev's entire platoon was in the attic. Hitler's men put up a desperate resistance. But, their fate was sealed. After a short fight, S'yanov suggested they surrender. With their hands raised, 17 men came out.

When the attic was clear, Yegorov and Kantariya, covered by the scouts, crawled out on the roof. However, they could not find the stairs to the dome. It was dark. What could they do? The scouts focused on the sculpture which crowned the gable of the building. They suddenly had an idea: attach the banner to the sculpture. That's what they did. Later we found out that this sculpture was put up in honor of the unification of all the German lands into a single nation.

After Kondrashov came downstairs with Yegorov and Kantariya (the rest of the men stayed to guard the banner), the captain reported:

"Comrade Colonel, the banner has been raised."

I thanked the scouts for their outstanding job. The time was 2250 hours. By first light on 1 May, the banner was transferred to the dome of the Reichstag. Fluttering proudly over the fascist capital, it greeted the sun's first rays.

And so, our dream came true: we were in Berlin and the banner which became the Victory Banner, was on the Parliament building! On the subject of this Banner, Leonid Il'ich Brezhnev, general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, said: "When the red banner which was raised by Soviet servicemen flew over the Reichstag, it was not just the banner of our military victory. It was, comrades, the immortal banner of October; it was Lenin's great banner; it was the invincible banner of socialism—a bright symbol of hope, a symbol of freedom and happiness for all people!"

It is difficult to communicate the feeling of joy that gripped me and my brothers in arms when we found out that the banner raised over the Reichstag was sparkling in the sunlight early in the morning of 1 May. Although we knew that we would still have to fight—after all, fighting was underway in the building itself—to a certain extent, the banner at the Reichstag marked the end of the war.

Just like me, my subordinates were happy about this remarkable event. After all, it was their banner—Sgt Petr Dorofeyevich Shcherbin from Kostroma, Lt Trofim Vodop'yanov from Kustanay, machinegunner Nikolay Lavrent'yevich Tere-shchenko from Donbass, Pvt Ivan Kupri anovich from the Gomel' area, trooper Agdula Agashev from Uzbekistan, JrLt Asetyk Kemirekov from Dzhambul'skaya Oblast, trooper Mark Dmitriyevich Oatu from Moldavia Sgt Vachek Davedyan from Armenia, radio operator Vasiliiy Pavlovich Kondratankov from Smolensk and the men of all 40 nationalities which fought in our regiment, the men who laid the way for scouts Yegorov and Kantariya who carried the banner.

Our famous 756th Rifle Regiment was the first to arrive at the Berlin suburb of Karow. In the heavy fighting, we successfully made forced crossings of two canals and the Spree River, seized the internal affairs ministry building and were the first to break into the Reichstag. The regiment was able to accomplish all this due to its combat fraternity with the 674th and 380th Rifle Regiments and due to the support from LtCols Gladkikh's and Sazonov's tankers and artillerymen.

Action for 1 May was set to begin at 0500 hours. But, it got underway a lot sooner. When the sunlight struck the narrow windows, fierce stubborn fighting was already underway in the building. Despite the frenzied enemy resistance, our men advanced step by step, clearing room after room. The fascists did not give a single inch without a fight.

By 1000 hours, the majority of the building was in our hands. Then, something unexpected happened. Having lost any hope of dislodging us from the Reichstag and not having any other way out, Hitler's forces set it on fire. The flames engulfed about 10 rooms. The smoke and stench filled the entire bottom floor. We had a problem: what should we do? Abandon the Reichstag until the fires died down and then retake it? No, this was not the way out. I ordered the men to put out the fire and continue fighting.

The artillerymen and mortarmen were called in to help the infantrymen and the firefighting got underway. It was a hard fight; after all, we did not have any fire extinguishers, fire trucks with hoses, or water at our disposal. There were only overcoats and ponchos at hand. Nevertheless, we put the fire out. By 2100 hours, we had cleared all the floors. The remnants of the enemy garrison had taken cover in the basement and only a few small groups were buttoned down and shooting from isolated rooms.

At 0800 on 2 May, Hitler's forces in the Reichstag surrendered. They requested that we designate the precise time and place for them to come out and lay down their arms. I sent my operations officer, Maj V. A. Sokolovskiy, to accept the enemy's surrender. An hour later, the fascists began to come up out of the basement and stack their weapons in the designated place. Approximately 300 men were taken prisoner.

For the courage and valor displayed in the fighting for Berlin and during the assault on the Reichstag, all the regiment's personnel were decorated. Those who especially distinguished themselves—Capt Neustroyev, SrSgt S'yanov, Sgt Yegorov, JrSgt Kantariya—were awarded the lofty title Hero of the Soviet Union. I also received this highest of the homeland's decorations.

At 1200 on 4 May, MSU Georgiy Konstantinovich Zhukov, accompanied by generals and officers from his headquarters, arrived at the Reichstag. I reported to him. The marshal shook my hand and asked:

"Tell me, colonel, how was the Reichstag taken?"

As briefly as I could, I told him about the battle, the men's courage and heroism and how we stormed the building and raised the banner.'

"Have the people who participated in the assault been submitted for decorations?" G. K. Zhukov asked with interest.

"Yes sir," I answered.

After that, everybody went to look at the Reichstag. It was already covered with our men's names. Thousands and thousands of autographs. The marshal looked them over closely.

"These signatures are evidence of our victory over fascism and they belong to history," he said, addressing those present.

Then, we entered the Reichstag. Georgiy Konstantinovich examined the Bundestag meeting room and then asked me:

"Colonel, did you ever think that you would be the Soviet commandant of the Reichstag?"

"No sir, never, Comrade Marshal."

"Well, I never thought that I would be standing inside this room where the German nation's domestic and foreign policy was set," he said. "But, I am."

After the warm goodbyes, G. K. Zhukov and his entourage left the Reichstag.

I was able to get to Berlin 34 years later. I walked along the once familiar streets and tried to remember what was there then. But, it was all in vain. It was a new city without any trace of the war. A city with a new life and new people.

For a long time, I stood near the Brandenburg Gate and looked at the Reichstag. It is in West Berlin. At first, I was not able to recognize it: the dome has been removed, the dome that the victory banner raised by Yegorov and Kantariya fluttered over early in the morning on 1 May. I looked at the Reichstag and remembered the past. I remembered our road to victory and how difficult it was for us; and I thought that we did not come here in vain then. We came for the future; we came for life on earth.

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## WARTIME OPERATIONS: THE BERLIN OPERATION

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 5, May 80 signed to press 22 Apr 80 pp 65-67

[Article, published under the heading "Documents and Materials," with documents prepared for publication by Col V. Kiselev: "On the 35th Anniversary of the Berlin Operation"]

[Text] The Berlin Operation was conducted from 16 April through 8 May 1945. Taking part in it were the 2nd, 1st Belorussian and 1st Ukrainian Fronts Commanded by MSU K. K. Rokossovskiy, G. K. Zhukov and I. S. Konev. In addition, the Long Range Aviation 18th Air Army was also used as was part of the Baltic Fleet's forces, the National Air Defense Forces and the Dnepr Naval Flotilla. Also operating as part of the fronts were the Polish Forces 1st and 2nd Armies and independent formations. This was one of the major operations of World War II. It resulted in fascist Germany's unconditional surrender and the end of the war in Europe.

During the fierce fighting, Soviet forces surrounded and wiped out the largest enemy force in history (over 400,000 men). Soviet forces devastated 93 fascist divisions and the majority of the Wehrmacht's air forces. Approximately 480,000 EW and officers were taken prisoner and a large quantity of weapons and equipment were also captured.

The preparation and conduct of the Berlin Operation made significant contributions to the theory and practice of the Soviet art of war and they have a number of special features. The operation was prepared over a 13-15 day period. During this brief time frame, commanding generals, commanders and headquarters at all levels carried out an enormous amount of preparatory measures, regrouped 15 armies over a distance of about 365 km, regrouped 3 armies (the 3rd, 28th and 34th) over a distance of 530 to 800 km, established enormous stockpiles of materiel and very thoroughly prepared our forces to carry out their combat mission.

The Berlin Operation is distinguished by the originality of its strategic concept and by its skillful execution in a difficult environment. The



simultaneous offensive by three fronts in a 300-km sector with 6 thrusts pinned down the enemy's reserve, helped disrupt his command and control and, in a number of cases, made it possible to achieve surprise. To a significant extent, the skillful employment and bold massing of tank and mechanized forces in the main sectors, both on a tactical and strategic scale, guaranteed the success of the operation.

The 1st Belorussian Front's offensive was preceded by reconnaissance in force, which, in contrast to previous operations, was conducted on 14 and 15 April by 32 reconnaissance detachments, each with the strength of a reinforced rifle battalion. The purpose of the reconnaissance was to clarify the enemy's defensive characteristics, force composition and to determine the strong points and the most vulnerable points in the defensive zone.

It was typical that the artillery preparation and the offensive got underway at night. The attack was conducted using searchlights. What was novel and interesting was the short, 20-minute artillery preparation by almost all the 1st Belorussian Front's armies and their execution of artillery preparations and artillery support at night using a double barrage to a depth of 2 km and a single barrage for another 2 km.

The Berlin Operation was the first experience obtained in the centralized employment of radar facilities: an army-level air radar center was established.

The use of smoke in the 1st Ukrainian Front's zone of advance along the Neisse River warrants special attention. To disorient the enemy, aircraft set up a smoke screen there along a 390-km front. There had never been such widespread use of smoke in any operation. In the Berlin Operation, Soviet forces demonstrated an expert ability for street fighting in a large city; during the fighting, artillery was used very effectively (Document 1).

The Berlin Operation ended with the link-up of the Soviet Army and the Anglo-American Allies; this link-up was supported by the clear-cut coordination among the Allied armies which were advancing toward each other (Document 2).

The Soviet forces brilliant victory in the Berlin Operation was vivid, convincing evidence of the Soviet nation's power, the superiority of the advanced Soviet art of war and of the men's superior skill and large-scale heroism.

Cited below are two little known, previously unpublished documents which describe some characteristic features of the Berlin Operation. They were prepared for publication by Col V. Kiselev.

#### DOCUMENT 1

From the 1st Belorussian Front commanding general's directive to army commanders on artillery support for the street fighting in Berlin.

241500 April 1945

Artillery support for street fighting in Berlin will be organized on the following principles:

a) an army will have only one LR [long-range] arty group drawn from the army field artillery brigade and artillery division gun artillery brigade resources; if these resources are insufficient, artillery division howitzer brigade resources will be included in the group;

b) all remaining artillery resources will be in rifle corps and divisions. Rifle corps will establish powerful, destructive groups which will include heavy brigades, heavy howitzer brigades, heavy mortar brigades, howitzer-mortar brigades and super-heavy battalions. Rifle divisions will establish division artillery groups drawn from artillery division howitzer brigade and mortar brigade resources and M-13 battalion resources. Light artillery brigade, antitank artillery brigade and army regimental batteries will be included in the assault detachments (companies, battalions).

Assault detachment operations will be preceded by a short, powerful artillery preparation using army, corps and division group resources. While firing is in progress, a 1 km depth will be taken in the sector of the army's main thrust.

The LR arty group will at the same time suppress all known arty batteries and all probable battery locations in the tactical depth.

Corps and division group artillery fire will overlap in sectors: a) in city blocks being handled by advancing infantry, to a depth of 400m along the entire breakthrough frontage with a mission of softening up the entire building area and the streets and street corners between the buildings; b) further on, to a depth of 1 km, to street corners while key buildings and structureless sectors are being captured. M-31 brigades and, in isolated cases, M-13 regiments will be given their own sectors without any overlap between them and tube artillery sectors.

At the onset of arty preparation, assault detachment ordnance will roll out to previously surveyed firing positions and open fire on targets presenting an immediate threat to the infantry.

As the infantry advances to a depth of 600m, the artillery carrying out the initial massed strike and the div arty gp will soften up the next kilometer strip according to the initial arty preparation principle. This method of support will continue until enemy resistance is completely suppressed.

Assault detachments (companies) will have 8-12 75-203-mm guns and 4-6 82-122-mm mortars; detachments of rifle battalion strength will have 16-24 guns and 8-12 mortars.

To implement this directive, the Front artillery commander will issue thorough instructions to armies and a detailed plan for using artillery in street fighting.

G. Zhukov, MSU  
Comdr, 1st Belorussian Front

LtGen Telegin  
Member, War Council  
1st Belorussian Front

ColGen Malinin  
Front Chief of Staff

USSR Defense Ministry Central Archives, f. 418, op. 16695, d. 23, ll. 150-152.

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DOCUMENT 2

Headquarters, Supreme High Command Directive on the link-up with Anglo-American forces and the establishment of signals and marks to identify Allied forces.

202330 April 1945

TO: Commanders, 1st and 2nd Belorussian and 1st Ukrainian Fronts

In view of the imminent link-up between Soviet forces and Anglo-American forces, the following marks and signals have been coordinated with Allied Headquarters to identify Soviet and Anglo-American forces:

1. Soviet forces (infantry, tanks, aircraft) will mark themselves with a series of red flares.

In addition to the flares, Soviet tanks will be marked with a single white stripe around the turret midsection and a white cross on the hull roofplate. The stripe and cross shall be 25 cm wide. These identification marks will not be put on all tanks, but only on lead tanks which will probably be the first to link up with British or American forces.

2. Anglo-American forces (infantry, tanks, aircraft) will mark themselves with a series of green flares.

In addition to the flares, Anglo-American tanks and armored vehicles will be marked with yellow or cherry-red fluorescent (at night) panels and with a white, five-pointed star surrounded by a white circle on the tank's horizontal surface.

3. In addition to the established flare signals, Soviet and Anglo-American aircraft will be marked with their own national markings.

The Headquarters, Supreme High Command directs that:

a) the established signals and identification marks will be disseminated to the forces, especially tank forces, and actual utilization of them will be guaranteed when required by the situation, i.e., a day prior to link-up with British or American forces.

In addition, to facilitate identification, forces will be supplied with silhouettes of British and American tanks and aircraft.

The established aircraft signals will be implemented immediately.

b) during the link-up with British or American forces, tank or combined arms army commanders will reach an agreement with senior Allied force commanders to establish a provisional tactical line of demarcation between Soviet and British or American forces to preclude intermingling. The establishment of this line will be based on the actual position of our forces and British or American forces prior to the link-up.

I. Stalin  
Antonov  
HQ, SHC

Defense Ministry Central Archives, f. 132-A, op. 2642, d. 38, ll. 14-15.

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## WARTIME OPERATIONS: SUPPLYING ARTILLERY WEAPONS AND AMMUNITION

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 5, May 80 signed to press 22 Apr 80 pp 70-74

[Article, published under the heading "Scientific Information," by ColGen Arty (Ret) I. Volkotrubenko: "Artillery Supply in the First Period of the War" ]

[Text] On the eve of the Great Patriotic War, the Artillery Supply Service was subordinate to the corresponding artillery commander (district, army, corps, division). The service was under the staff supervision of the Main Artillery Directorate (MAD).

According to the accepted artillery supply system, weapons and ammunition were supplied directly from the central artillery supply depot to the forward artillery supply dumps located at combined arms army supply centers. From here, they were sent to division dumps and then on to unit ammunition points. As we can see, there was no Front link in this setup. Fascist Germany's perfidious attack on the USSR when preparations to repel the first enemy attacks were not complete brought about important adjustments in the Soviet forces combat operations. Instead of advancing, it was necessary to go on the defensive everywhere. As a result, there was an urgent requirement to change Artillery Supply Service operations.

At the beginning of the war, all the western military districts transitioned to operational fronts. The Northern Front Artillery Supply Service was headed by the chief of artillery supply, Military Engineer 1st Rank V. I. Shebanin; at the Northwestern Front it was headed by Arty MajGen A. I. Razintsev; at the Western Front, it was headed by Col D. K. Romanovskiy and later by OM MajGen A. S. Volkov; at the Southwestern Front, it was headed by Arty MajGen I. I. Volkotrubenko; and at the Southern Front, it was headed by Col P. L. Rozhkov. The duties of the Front chief of artillery supply (CAS) included: replacing and replenishing ammunition and weapons and repairing them during combat operations. Since ammunition expenditures at certain fronts were not very large and the stockpiles were, the CAS had the problem of storing them. Things were also about the same in the divisions which had increased ammunition stockpiles in the border districts.

Due to the swift advance of fascist German forces in the northwestern and western sectors, the large ammunition stockpiles at many of the border district ammunition depots were lost. The situation was somewhat different in the south. For example, at the Southwestern Front, ammunition stockpiles had been spread throughout the Kiev Military District in peacetime. The army logistic services had approximately 12% of the ammunition stockpiles and the Front logistics service had approximately 88% of all the stockpiles; of these, 37% were beyond the Dnepr.

As combat operations unfolded, the Southwest Front Headquarters transferred part of the Front artillery supply depots (Nos 830, 829, 831) to the 5th, 6th, and 12th Armies. They also supplied the armies with ammunition during the first months of the war.<sup>1</sup>

The accepted artillery supply system within the forces was impractical with our forces withdrawal. The forward artillery supply dumps did not have time to completely mobilize; therefore, there was an immediate implementation of a new supply structure: the Front logistics services formed Front artillery weapons supply depots and Front artillery ammunition supply depots. The armies formed army combined field depots. Corps, divisions and regiments retained the old supply structure. The new logistics units were formed with the personnel and equipment from the former district depots.

In 1941, new Fronts were established: Bryansk (Col M. V. Kuznetsov, CAS), Kalinin (Arty MajGen A. P. Baykov, CAS), Volkhov (Col M. P. Smakhtin, CAS), Karelian (Col N. M. Bocharov, CAS). They did not have any prewar depots and supply was conducted according to the newly adopted supply structure.

The 1941 weapons and ammunition losses, as well as the drop in defense industry production capacity as a result of planned evacuations, were extremely large. Therefore, units and formations were supplied weapons at reduced standards pursuant to a NDC (National Defense Council) order. Ammunition consumption was strictly limited.

During the first period of the war, the artillery supply service worked under extremely difficult conditions since our forces required more weapons and ammunitions and the MAD had limited amounts of them: the primary stockpiles were destroyed or abandoned during the withdrawal. In addition, there were deficiencies in MAD. Thus, there was no strict accountability for this service before the war. The priority ammunition report schedule appeared at the end of 1941 and the priority weapons report schedule appeared in April 1942.

At that threatening time for our country—through the Soviet people's heroic efforts under the wise leadership of the AUCP (B) Central Committee and the NDC and with the active assistance of local party organizations—the war industry had, during the second half of 1941, supplied the army with 1.6 million rifles and carbines, 106,200 machineguns, 89,700 automatic weapons, 30,200 artillery pieces, 42,300 mortars, 62,900 shells, bombs and mines.<sup>2</sup>

This made it possible to partially cover the losses and, to a certain extent, to fill requests from the Front engaged in defensive fighting and also to supply the Western Front which was preparing for the counteroffensive at Moscow.

On 10 October 1941, the Front had 2,317,800 shells and mortar rounds; during a 3 month period, it received 2,568,300 and expended 2,437,000. While the overall Front balance was positive, the supply of such line items as 76, 122 and 152-mm rounds was very tight and it was critical for 120-mm mortar rounds. During 1941, the entire Western Front expended 13,133,600 shells, or 10,828 carloads, and lost 4,231,000 (4,216 carloads).<sup>3</sup>

The MAD took immediate steps to accelerate the delivery of ammunition to the Front; but, it was a long, hard road from the supply bases to the firing positions. Transports from MAD bases arrived at the Front distribution center. From there, they went to Front depots (or were readdressed to the armies). From the Front depots, the motor vehicle cargo was sent to army depots and, from there, to division dumps and on down to regiments and to battery firing positions. The artillery supply service's job was made very difficult by bad weather conditions. The road status had sharply deteriorated: first, the rainy fall ruined the dirt roads; then, the early winter with its 30 degrees below zero temperatures and the snowfall hampered motor vehicle traffic significantly.

Weapons and ammunition supply for the Western Front was proceeding in a difficult environment. Most of the plants in Moscow and Moskovskaya Oblast were shifted to weapons and ammunition production. At the same time, the majority of the heartland plants' war output was also being sent to the capital. The Communist Party and the Soviet people were doing everything possible so the Red Army would win the battle for Moscow and deliver a crushing defeat to Hitler's invading forces. During those difficult times, even Leningrad—which was blockaded—sent the capital about 591 50-mm, 115 82-mm and 220 120-mm mortars, 431 76-mm regimental guns and 39,700 armor piercing shells for the 76-mm regimental guns. These weapons were delivered by air from the Leningrad Front depot to Cherepovets Station; from there, they went by rail to their destination.

A significant part of the weapons put at MAD's disposal went to flesh out the Hq SHC Reserves--the 1st Shock Army and the 20th and 10th Armies which were completely activated by the beginning of the Soviet forces counter-offensive at Moscow.

The difficulty in supplying weapons for the forces at that time was covered very well by MSU G. K. Zhukov in his memoirs: "In general, our country's resources at that time were extremely limited. Force requirements still could not be satisfied as required by the mission and the situation. Things had reached the point that each time we were summoned to the Hq SHC, we literally begged the Supreme Commander in Chief for antitank rifles, Shpagin submachineguns, 10-15 antitank guns and the absolute minimum number of shells and mortar rounds. Everything we were able to get like this was immediately

loaded in vehicles and sent to the armies most in need." <sup>4</sup> Yes, MAAP only issued weapons to the Fronts at that time with permission from the Supreme Commander in Chief!

The shortfall in weapons within armies was compensated for to a certain extent by overhauling weapons in artillery workshops. For example, in 1941 at the Western Front, they overhauled 89,864 rifles, 4,713 machineguns, 44 mortars, 1,321 artillery pieces and 1,876 instruments of various kinds. <sup>5</sup>

A high rating was earned by Front, army and division field artillery supply depot personnel's performance under these severe winter conditions and lack of roads during the counteroffensive at Moscow. They did everything possible to supply the attacking forces with ammunition and weapons. The successful operations of all levels of arty supply service were greatly facilitated by the continual, well coordinated party political work. The communists in charge of the services at all echelons set a personal example of exemplary performance of their military duty. Under their leadership, the men and officers of the artillery weapons service efficiently carried out all the command element's assignments.

In the fall of 1942, the fascist German forces delivered their main thrust in the southern sector of the Soviet-German Front, pressing home the attack on Voronezh and then on Stalingrad and the Northern Caucasus. On 12 July, the Stalingrad Front was established. The level of weapons supplies for its forces was not very high. On 15 July 1942, the Stalingrad Front (Col T. S. Iyshenko, MAS, and later, Col A. I. Markov) had: about 207,838 rifles and submachineguns, 6,783 machineguns, 6,191 antitank rifles, 6,204 mortars, 135 antiaircraft guns and 1,937 field guns. <sup>6</sup> The Front's level of ammunition was also low.

During the defensive engagements, the Stalingrad and Southeastern Fronts were supplied with weapons and ammunition along the remaining rail lines and water routes until September. When the fascist German forces broke through to the Volga and began fighting right at Stalingrad, all the lines of communication on the right bank were cut and the city was supplied solely by the single-track Saratov-Verkhniy Baskunchak branch line. Ammunition was off loaded along the entire stretch of the Urbakh-Verkhniy Baskunchak rail section. To deliver them to the forces quicker, the Front commander put two motor vehicle battalions under the artillery supply directorate's command; within an extremely limited period of time, they transported over 500 carloads of ammunition.

Due to frequent enemy air raids and shelling, the Front and army depots frequently changed locations. Trains were only unloaded at night. Transportation was dispersed. For example, ammunition was sent to army depots and their detachments via small mobile detachments with 5-10 carloads in each one and it was sent to the forces in small vehicle columns. As a result, the ammunition was protected but delivery time to the forces increased.



Over a four month period in the Urbakh-Verkhny Baskunchak sector, the enemy was only able to damage two rail shipments with mines. Everything else made it to the forces. This was achieved due to the heroic, military labor of the Front logistics service officers and EM and the efficient teamwork of artillery supply service personnel at all levels. As war plants came on line, especially those evacuated to the East, and as their production capacity expanded, there was a noticeable improvement in weapons and ammunition supplies for the forces beginning in the second quarter of 1942. During the July-November period, just the Fronts taking part in the defensive engagement at Stalingrad received from the logistics center: about 7,000 antitank rifles (of them, 6,060 went to the Stalingrad Front), 5,300 machineguns (4,815 to the Stalingrad Front), 5,500 mortars (4,600 to the Stalingrad Front), 2,400 artillery pieces (1,715 to the Stalingrad Front), 4,679 mortar rounds of all calibers (2,997 to the Stalingrad Front), 710,000 antiaircraft artillery rounds (350,000 to the Stalingrad Front) and 5,109,000 ground-based artillery rounds (3,546,000 to the Stalingrad Front). A total of 5,388 carloads of weapons and ammunition were delivered.<sup>7</sup>

The officers and EM of the Stalingrad Front logistics service displayed courage and great ingenuity. The performance of the 62nd Army's arty supplymen (Col M. A. Bukarev, CAS) merits special attention. The army's units were defending a narrow, completely pinned down area in the eastern part of Stalingrad. On 18 September, to guarantee an uninterrupted supply of ammunition, the army war council decided to establish a special artillery mobile detachment near the Red October Plant and Crossing 62. It was headed by the army's deputy chief of arty supply, Col P. N. Sokolov. The mobile detachment's mission was to unload ammunition from barges and transport it to the depot, conceal it in ditches, issue it to units, store it and protect it. The mobile detachment personnel's job was a story of heroism. The enemy frequently came up close to them, to a distance of 50-70m, and fired their automatic weapons.

Just as difficult were the conditions under which ammunition was supplied to Col B. F. Gorokhov's group. Cut off from the army logistics service, it successfully beat off enemy attacks for over a month. To a great extent, this was due to the fact that the Front and army arty supply service set up uninterrupted ammunition deliveries to the group on U-2 aircraft. Every night, 10 to 25 aircraft made 3-4 trips apiece and paratropped 100-200 ammunition containers weighing 100 kg each.

In the defensive engagement at Stalingrad, Soviet forces expended 7,610,000 shells and mortar rounds; of them, the Stalingrad Front expended approximately 5 million.<sup>8</sup> According to HQ, SHC directives, the MAE and front arty supply services were not only able to supply the Front with weapons and ammunition, but also to build up a sufficient number of shells and mortar rounds for the counteroffensive.

At the same time as the large-scale engagement at Stalingrad, combat operations were unfolding in the Northern Caucasus in the Summer of 1942. In September 1942, the North Caucasus Front was engaged in heavy defensive

fighting. To cover its losses and to establish formations, the front needed a lot of weapons and it needed a large amount of ammunition to support combat operations. By that time, all lines of communication in the south were cut and deliveries of cargo through the European USSR were ruled out. Therefore, supplying the North Caucasus and Transcaucasus Fronts with weapons and ammunition was an even more difficult problem than it was at Stalingrad.

Weapons and ammunition from the central bases in the Urals and Siberia were sent to the Caucasus by rail via Tashkent and Ashkhabad to Krasnovodsk. There, they were transferred to sea transport and sealifted to Baku where they were reloaded on trains and delivered to the army railheads. From there, the cargo went down to division dumps on motor vehicles. This was the long difficult route covered by the weapons and ammunition before they wound up in the hands of the heroic defenders of the Caucasus. For example, ammunition transport No 83/0418 was enroute from the Urals for 90 days. In spite of everything, the transports moved and thousands of carloads of ammunition and weapons reached the Fronts. Before the end of 1942, this route carried: about 30,000 rifles and automatic weapons, 1,000 machineguns, 14,000 anti-tank rifles, 11,000 guns and mortars and 2,000 carloads of ammunition.<sup>9</sup>

The situation was even more difficult in supplying the forces of blockaded Leningrad. The lifeline was the besieged city's only contact with the country. It carried all the supplies required by the Leningrad Front, including weapons and ammunition. But, under the leadership of the City AMCP (B) Committee, the citizens of Leningrad expanded production of the most common items of ammunition and weapons. The Front War Council supervised production of artillery weapons through the chief of artillery, Arty MajGen G. F. Odintsov, and through the CAS, Mil Engr 1st Rank V. I. Shebanin, and later Regt Commissar G. D. Golubev.

From September 1941 to the end of the blockade, Leningrad industry manufactured and delivered to the Front: 10,000 automatic weapons, 7,700 mortars and 2,300 guns.<sup>10</sup> Until the blockade was broken, MAD sent the Leningrad Front 6,258 carloads of weapons, ammunition and components for ammunition rounds. Leningrad's industry manufactured 2.5 times more ammunition than was delivered from the central bases.<sup>11</sup>

So, during the first period of the Great Patriotic War, the artillery supply service performed in an extremely difficult environment. Even during the first months of the war, it was necessary to reorganize the entire artillery supply system to meet the nature of combat operations and the requirements of the war.

Due to the heroic efforts of the working class, the war industry increased the rate of war production month by month. In 1942, the forces received 125,000 mortars, 33,100 guns, 76-mm and higher, and 127.4 million shells.<sup>12</sup> This made it possible for MAD to completely replace weapons lost in combat and expended ammunition, which made it easier for the artillery supply service and made it possible to significantly improve its work.

While supplying the Soviet forces defensive operations, MAO and the artillery supply services gained a great deal of experience in stockpiling the ammunition required for major offensive operations.

In the difficult defensive fighting and under continual pressure from enemy artillery and aircraft, the personnel of the artillery supply service--the men of the artillery repair shops and the field artillery supply dumps and the chiefs of artillery supply at all levels--guaranteed an uninterrupted supply of weapons and ammunition to the forces. For the courage and heroism displayed in accomplishing combat missions in the battles for Moscow and Stalingrad and during the defense of the Caucasus, Leningrad and other cities, many generals, officers, NCO's and FM of the artillery weapons service were decorated. Their job experience was consolidated and widely disseminated.

#### FOOTNOTES

1. USSR Defense Ministry Central Archives (DMCA), f. 131, op. 45427, d. 1, ll. 129-132, 168, 169.
2. "Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy voyny 1939-1945," vol 4, Voenizdat, 1975, p 158.
3. DMCA, f. 208, op. 2546, l. 79.
4. B. K. Zhukov. "Vospominaniya i razmyshleniya," (Recollections and Reflections), vol 2, Moscow, izd. APN, 1978, p 50.
5. DMCA, f. 208, op. 2546, d. 203, l. 70.
6. Ibid., f. 81, op. 12079, d. 104, ll. 55, 78.
7. Ibid., l. 85.
8. Ibid., l. 87.
9. Ibid., d. 47, l. 11; d. 49, l. 45.
10. Ibid., f. 117, op. 1236, d. 51, ll. 60, 61.
11. Ibid., f. 81, op. 12079, d. 47, l. 17.
12. "Tyi Sovetskikh Vooruzhennykh Sil v Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyne," (Soviet Armed Forces Logistics Service in the Great Patriotic War), Voenizdat, 1977, pp 163, 164.

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## MILITARY LITERATURE: IMPORTANCE OF BOOKS IN WARTIME NOTED

Moscow VOYENNO-ISKUSTVENSKIY JURNAL in Russian No 5, May 80 signed to press  
22 Apr 80 in TS-78

[Article by Post-Graduate Student of the Moscow City Institute of Culture  
Ye. Pankova: "The Military Book During the War"]

[Text] The Soviet people and all progressive mankind are triumphantly celebrating the 35th Anniversary of the USSR's Victory in the Great Patriotic War. On the eve of this celebration, our country's workers and servicemen are evaluating the results and analyzing the factors which contributed to our glorious victory over fascist Germany, which was international imperialism's powerful strike force. The Soviet people have rightfully designated the wise Leninist party as the organizer of the victorious fight against fascism; the party was able to unite all the Soviet people's economic, socio-political, military and intellectual strength to defeat the perfidious enemy.

The party had a powerful ideological weapon during the Great Patriotic War in the patriotic military books which did develop endless devotion to the socialist homeland and a fervent hatred of the sworn enemy--fascism--in Soviet servicemen and the workers on the home front. The authors of the books focused on elucidating the reasons for the war, its nature and its goals, a war started by the fascist German invaders to realize the age old dream of international capital to stifle the world's first socialist nation of workers and peasants. The books devoted a lot of space to demonstrating the just nature of the war on the part of the USSR and the unjust, predatory, aggressive nature of the war undertaken by the fascists against the Soviet Union. In this respect, special importance was given to publishing the classics of Marxism-Leninism, documents of the Communist Party and the Soviet government and books on our people's heroic past, the people who had defeated numerous enemy hordes during their century-long history.

Between 1941-1945, we published over 500 editions of the works of Marx, Engels and Lenin, with a total edition of approximately 17 million copies; they included works by the leader of the revolution, such as, "The Proletarian Revolution's War Platform," "The National Trade of the Great Russian," "The Socialist Homeland is in Danger!," "A Difficult but



Necessary Lesson," "The Main Task of our Day" and others. They were printed in many of the languages of the USSR and foreign countries.

In 1942, "Documents of the Great October Socialist Revolution" and a Lenin anthology "Defending the Socialist Homeland" were published. They contained V. I. Lenin's statements on just and unjust wars as well as his instructions on what should be done during the trials of war. Millions of Soviet people, including the men of the army and navy, read and reread the anthology published in 1943 "V. I. Lenin: War Correspondence: 1917-1920" and the two volumes of Lenin's works covering the Civil War and the intervention.

A great event in the ideological affairs of the party and the people was the publication of "Vladimir Il'ich Lenin: A Brief Sketch of his Life and Activities," which was published at the beginning of 1942. It was studied by the men at the front lines and the workers on the home front during the lulls in combat or during shift breaks. For example, the serviceman and Komsomol member M. G. Yakovenko carried the book along the entire difficult route from the Volga to the Spree<sup>2</sup> and knew the contents down to the slightest detail. The leader's image inspired the Soviet people to heroic feats in combat and at work.

During the war, there were large-scale editions of articles and speeches by prominent party figures and statesmen. The brochures by M. I. Kalinin "Lenin on Defending the Socialist Homeland," by A. S. Shcherbakov "Under Lenin's Banner" and by Ye. Yaroslavskiy "The Red Army's 25 Years," which were published in 1942-1943, discussed V. I. Lenin's wartime activities and popularized his wartime instructions, which facilitated a more in-depth explanation of the class nature of the war of liberation against fascism.

A book of major importance in mobilizing the Soviet people to defeat the enemy was I. V. Stalin's "The Soviet Union's Great Patriotic War," which was translated into many of the USSR's languages. It comprehensively discussed the Communist Party's role as the organizer of and inspiration for the Soviet people's fight against the fascist invaders and it showed the lofty patriotism, determination and heroism of our servicemen and the workers on the home front.

The collections of speeches and articles by M. I. Kalinin "Everything for the Front lines! Everything for victory!" and by Ye. Yaroslavskiy "The Soviet People's Great Patriotic War Against Hitler's Germany," which were published in 1942, and P. Maslitskiy's brochure "The Citizen-Hero, The Citizen-Soldier" (1944) convincingly revealed the goals of liberation for the war, the sources of Soviet patriotism and the invincibility of the Soviet societal and governmental system.

The multinational nature of the Soviet Armed Forces made it necessary to publish books, brochures, magazines and newspapers in the languages of the USSR to support military and political training. During the war, we published over 100 political, military and fiction book titles and brochures in national languages: the editions reached 350-650,000 copies.

Prominent Soviet scientists--natural scientists and historians--took an active part in explaining the nature and special features of the Great Patriotic War, and the nature and importance of Soviet patriotism and in publicizing our homeland's heroic path and the fighting traditions of the USSR nations. For example, the following were published during the war: a collection of articles by M. Mitin "The Great Patriotic War Against the Fascist German Invaders," M. N. Nechkina's book "The Historical Traditions of Russian Military Heroism" and A. Fedoseyev's brochures "The Soviet People's War Against Hitler's Germany: A Just War of Liberation" and "The Red Army's Great Liberation Missions."

The feeling of national pride and faith in the future victory was strengthened by the influence of books and brochures published during the war about our great forefathers--Alexander Nevskiy, Dmitry Donskoy, Dmitry Pozharskiy, Kuz'ma Minin, the famous Russian military leaders A. V. Suvorov and M. I. Kutuzov and admirals F. F. Ushakov and P. S. Nakhimov and the Ukrainian national hero Bogdan Khmel'nitskiy.

During the Great Patriotic War, especially during the first period of it, it was very important to disclose to the Soviet people the full depth of our country's imminent danger and the brutal nature of the fascist German army and to inculcate a fervent hatred of the invaders. This was actively promoted by books published between 1942-1943: 15 collections of documents "The Fascist German Invaders' Brutality," two anthologies "Indicted by the Documents" and a collection of letters and documents "Bloodshed" on the fascists' insults and violence, annihilation of Soviet people and their subjugation. These books stirred up our citizens' anger and indignation and summoned them to heroic feats for the beloved homeland.

The publications of the last war devoted major space to the art of war, an analysis of operations and battles and the consolidation of army and navy unit and formation combat experience. In this area, especially great services were rendered by the USSR People's Defense Commissariat's Army Publishing House, the main military press. The books they published on the heroic defense of the great cities and the fascist German forces' defeat at Moscow, Stalingrad, Kursk and Izyum had a very large educational and mobilizing impact. This same objective was accomplished by the books on the first military formations which demonstrated examples of determination, persistence, skill and heroism in the fight against the enemy on land, at sea and in the air, formations which were awarded the lofty Guards title, government decorations and honorifics. The same purpose was served by the brochures and books which were systematically published on the Soviet art of war which actively evolved during the war and proved its complete superiority over the art of war of Hitler's army. These works included: D. Chikin's "The German Defeat at Tikhvin: A Brief Synopsis," M. Saldavay's "The Male-Vishneroy Operation: A Brief Synopsis," I. Vorobkov's "The Defeat of the Southern German Strike Corps at Krasnodar," The December 1941 Tula Offensive Operation: A Brief Synopsis and Tactical Synopsis," V. Khvostov's "The German November 1941 Retreat at Leningrad: A Brief Synopsis," A. Borisenko's "The Defense of Odessa: A Brief Synopsis and Tactical Synopsis" and N. Iamyatkin's and F. Vorobkov's "The Defense of Sevastopol'."

Our military's strategic and tactical expertise was enhanced by many popular science books published during the war, such as "The Growth in the Red Army's Art of War During the Patriotic War" by Ye. A. Shilovskiy, "Night Fighting: An Anthology of Tactics from the Patriotic War," "The Great Crossing of the Dnepr" (1944) and "Ten Crushing Attacks: A Brief Overview of Soviet Army Operations in 1944," by P. S. Boldyrev.

The military press widely publicized the Red Army's experience in combat operations--infantry, armor, artillery, air force and naval formations and units. Worthy of attention are such works as the anthologies "The Lessons of Frontline Combat Experience," "Destroying Enemy Strong Points," "The Infantry in Combined Arms Combat," "The Artillery Offensive," "The Year of Decisive Victories in the Air" (1944-1945), as well as the brochures "Fighter Wings" by A. I. Pokryshkin, "Three Engagements" by I. N. Kozhedub, "A Submariner's Notes" by I. I. Fionovitch and others.

Based on the consolidated combat experience of the army and navy during the war and due to their being supplied with new military hardware and weapons, military regulations and field manuals were revised and reissued: infantry (Parts 1 and 2, 1942), armored and mechanized forces (Part 1, 1944), anti-aircraft artillery (1941-1944) and others. They contained the principles for organizing and waging combat and for force command and control. Special attention was devoted to the decisive nature of our forces combat operations and the significant increase in esprit among Soviet servicemen was taken into account.

Throughout the entire war, popular brochures in the series "The Red Soldier's Library: From Life at the Front" and "The Red Sailor's Library" were published. They were created with the participation of prominent Soviet writers, poets and journalists. One of the major trends in the military press during those threatening years was publicizing the large-scale heroism of Soviet servicemen. Very popular at the front lines and on the home front were the numerous brochures in the series "Heroes of the Patriotic War," which were efficiently published at that time; they described the heroic feats of servicemen of various nationalities who were awarded the title Hero of the Soviet Union.

Of major importance in the patriotic education of young people were the books and brochures published by the "Young Guards" Publishing House. The book "The Komsomol in the Battles for the Homeland" (1942) vividly tells about the feats of Lisa Davydova, Viktor Talalikhin, Zoya Kosmodem'yanskaya, Timur Frunze and many others. The heroism and selflessness of the young defenders of the socialist homeland at the front lines were discussed in the books by V. Ivanov "Young People of Leningrad in the Battles for the Homeland," M. Larionov "Young Defenders of Tula" and M. Pidtychenko "The Ukrainian Komsomol in the Battles for the Homeland." The feats of young heroes--partisans and members of the underground--are discussed in the books "In the Enemy's Rear: Stories, Diaries and Notes on the Komsomol and Young People's Participation in the Partisan Fight" and "Krasnodon Heroes: Materials and Documents on the Young Guards Underground Komsomol Organization's Operations in the Enemy's Rear" (1943).

The heroic Soviet partisan operations in the rear of the fascist German occupying forces during the war were discussed in many books and brochures. The very beginning of the war saw the publication of the brochures "The National Partisan War in the Enemy's Rear," "Partisans" and "Soviet Partisans" by Yu. Zhukov. For the people in the occupied areas, a 650,000 copy edition of the book "Partisan's Companion"<sup>3</sup> was published. The publications on war topics during the war revealed the unity of the front lines and the home front as a source of our strength and invincibility. Examples are the books "The People's Mandate: Letters from the People of the USSR to the Frontline Fighting Men," "Patriots' Letters," "The Frontlines and the Home Front," "Correspondence Between Residents of the Far East and Frontline Soldiers," a letter "To the Kirghiz Fighting Men from the Kirghiz People," "At the Homeland's Call" (correspondence between the Uzbek people and Uzbek fighting men) and many others.

The progress of mass defense work among civilians was widely discussed. Large editions of books and brochures on military principles were published for units at schools, men of the Home Guard and destruction battalions and various air defense formations and groups.

It is difficult to overrate the enormous role played by continual, goal-directed party political work in the army and navy during the war. This valuable experience was discussed in collections of documents from the Soviet Army's Main Political Directorate for 1942-1945. They prepared and published five large editions of books and brochures on the activities of unit and shipboard party and Komsomol organizations in a combat environment.

Books on the war and military patriotic books during the last war were the major means of indoctrinating army and navy servicemen and all our people in a spirit of high Soviet patriotism and proletarian internationalism and endless devotion to the homeland and Communist Party.

When the fascists were completely driven out of the USSR, the Soviet Armed Forces began liberating the subjugated European people. There was an urgent requirement to publish essential literature in foreign languages. The Soviet publishing houses published over a hundred titles of pamphlets, brochures, collections of documents and works of fiction in Polish, Czech, Bulgarian, Hungarian, Yugoslavian, German and Romanian; these publications revealed the goals and objectives of the fight against fascism right up to the time of its total destruction.

The valuable factual material in these books and brochures is presently being used on a widespread basis in the noble job of providing patriotic military education for the Soviet people and the people of the fraternal countries of the socialist community, especially their young servicemen and those who are getting ready to enter the ranks of the army and navy.



FOOTNOTES

1. "Istoriya Kommunisticheskoy partii Sovetskogo Soyuza. V shesti tomakh," vol 5, bk 1, Moscow, Politizdat, 1970, p 409.
  2. "BIBLIOTHEKA", No 5, 1965
  3. Komsomol Central Committee Archives, "Materials on the Komsomol Central Committee Report to the 11th Komsomol Congress: 1936-1949," 1. 52.
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#### BOOK REVIEW: MEMOIRS OF ARMY POLITICAL OFFICER

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 5, May 80 signed to press  
22 Apr 80 pp 78-82

[Review of the book "Vesna pobedy" (The Spring of Victory) by LtGen F. Ye. Bokov. Reviewer: Col (Ret) S. Sukhachev]

[Text] During the final operations of the Great Patriotic War (the Vistula-Oder and Berlin operations), the 5th Shock Army (ColGen N. E. Berzarin, commander; LtGen F. Ye. Bokov, member, War Council; MajGen A. M. Kushchev, chief of staff) was operating in the sectors of the 1st Belorussian Front's main thrust and it made a major contribution to the final defeat of Hitler's forces. However, very little has been published on this army's combat operations in our postwar military memoirs. Now, this gap has been filled. We have recently published the interesting memoirs of a former member of the 5th Shock Army's War Council, F. Ye. Bokov,<sup>1</sup> who traversed the glorious combat route from Kishinev to Berlin under its victorious banner.

The book provides a good description of the army war council's multifaceted activities in the operations covered, activities in force command and control, organizing and conducting party political work on the eve of and during the offensive, combat and equipment support, organizing the military and political training which was conducted day and night with a maximum of strain on the trainees' strength and capabilities (pp. 37, 136).

The men's life at the front was primarily made up of two components at that time--training and fighting. This life, pointed out L. I. Brezhnev, "...had room for everything that a man usually does. We read and published newspapers, held party meetings, celebrated holidays and listened to lectures."<sup>2</sup>

In anticipation of the large offensive, the army war council directed the efforts of the command and political personnel of all branch arms to training their subordinates for skillful, coordinated combat operations during the breakthrough of a strongly fortified, multitiered enemy defense which combined natural obstructions and manmade fortifications and which was saturated with manpower, equipment and weapons.

A proper explanation of the major front offensive operation's overall goal, the 5th Shock Army's place and role in it, thorough planning of combat operations, the high morale and military training of the men who were well trained for conducting coordinated combat operations in units and formations with attached and supporting weapons gave the war council a reason for anticipating superior results in the forthcoming offensive. These forecasts were based on a realistic estimate of the overall situation at the front, the force ratios and the combat capabilities, morale and psychological state of friendly and enemy forces. That their assumptions were correct was quickly corroborated.

The author warily writes about the members of the war council and their heavy work load. He has been able to give an interesting account of specific deeds of each of them and to reveal their character traits and official traits. Of special interest are the pages devoted to the army commander, ColGen N. F. Berzarin--a talented military leader, an outstanding military expert, a good organizer and an excellently educated, very sociable and charming man. He infected his subordinates with his feverish energy, convinced them with the logic and depth of his judgement and surprised them with his ability to draw generalizations from small, unconnected facts. He had the ability to evoke frankness in people; he discovered their strong and weak points and helped them develop their good traits and get rid of the shortcomings (pp. 11, 37, 48).

In achieving a high level of field training for his forces, Nikolay Erastovich supervised the preparations for and conduct of formation, unit and even small unit tactical exercises personally and through members of the war council; he was able to critique them constructively and to give practical recommendations on the most feasible operations considering the situation, terrain and specific enemy (pp. 47, 136, 137). Moreover, the commander demanded that each man (crew, team), unit and formation know his mission, place and role in the overall battle (operation) plan well. He stimulated an interest in expert employment of the firepower and striking power of weapons and military hardware and in coordinating efforts during battle by location, time and target with adjacent units and with attached and support resources. He knew the way to the men's hearts; he skillfully kindled hatred for the fascist scum in them and instilled a love for the motherland, developed respect for the subjugated people of Europe and called upon them to liberate these people from Hitler's tyranny, including the German people (pp. 145, 148).

The army war council worked in an atmosphere of total, mutual understanding while resolving the diverse problems of a forthcoming operation together. Now, decades later, the author gratefully recalls the practical assistance and support received from the Front commander, Mar G. K. Zhukov, the front war council member, Gen K. F. Telegin, and the chief of the political directorate, Gen S. F. Galadzhiev. During exercises, field firing, army war games and seminars for army command personnel, they explained the trainees' role in the forthcoming Front operation and the missions which they would accomplish when the offensive began and during it (pp. 29, 38, 42, 48-51).

In cooperation with the 8th Guards Army, the 5th Shock Army's combat operations in penetrating the enemy's defense and supporting the commitment of the Front's mobile group, as well as the swift advance by the main body of its forces to the Oder by exploiting the success of the tank armies which had broken out, greatly exceeded the staff officers' "well-grounded" estimates for the operation.

Thus, the 5th Shock Army's offensive operation was planned for a depth of 155 km and a rate of advance of 13-15 km per day (p. 43). However, during the first five days, the army's forward detachment advanced 370 km with a rate of advance of 80-100 km per day at times (p. 76).

The forces high offensive spirit was a direct result of their field training which was based on the Soviet Army's glorious combat traditions which originated with the great Lenin who laid the foundation for the Soviet art of war.

The author provides good coverage of the organization and conduct of party political work in the army's units and formations during various stages of the preparation and conduct of combat operations. Especially valuable were the meetings of representatives of all branch arms to exchange experience in maintaining uninterrupted coordination during an offensive. This problem was given top priority by the Army War Council (pp. 12, 30, 34, 35, 39, 106, 107, 138).

The war council's requirements that an individual approach be taken toward trainees during military and political training will undoubtedly be of interest to today's commanders and political officers (p. 140); this approach completely meets the didactic principles of today's Soviet military teaching methods. In ideological and political indoctrination and combat training, widespread use can be found for the numerous examples which show the communists' leading role in combat where they frequently used their sole privilege, "just one right, just one duty—to be the first to go into the attack, to be the first to rush into fire."<sup>3</sup> Examples of large-scale heroism in the fight with a fierce enemy were set by many rank and file fighting men of Lenin's party. They inspired the non-party servicemen to heroic feats; they displayed uncommon determination, courage, daring and valor in engagements, even with a numerically superior enemy (pp. 225, 226, 241, 264, 319).

The absolutely best fighting traits of the army's men were displayed in the final operation of the war with fascism--the Berlin Operation. The author has devoted the main part of the book to these events and the postwar establishment of a democratic Germany.

The preparations for the Berlin and Vistula-Oder Operations have some common and some distinctive features. Both began from bridgeheads with a breakthrough of a powerful, in-depth defense.



In contrast to the deliberate preparations for the Vistula-Oder Operation, the Berlin Operation was prepared within a short deadline and with difficult ceaseless fighting at the Kuestrin bridgehead, with extended logistics lines and with fierce fighting in Eastern Pomerania by armies of the 1st Belorussian Front's right flank, reinforced by two tank armies. Because of this, the 5th Shock Army War Council had to resolve a large number of very diverse and difficult problems in preparing the forces and headquarters for an offensive during a short time frame. There were requirements for a complex force regrouping, replacing men and equipment, hammering together units, working out branch arm coordination, training them in river crossing and preparing for combat operations in major built-up areas. All of this was accomplished in an environment which simulated the future battles and took into account the consolidated, widespread experience of previous operations.

The primary mission of the army's party political work was to guarantee high esprit and an offensive spirit among the army's formation and unit personnel in a difficult fight with a major enemy force grouping which occupied powerful, defensive positions on the approaches to Berlin itself. This mission was successfully accomplished.

As in the previous operation, the army's forces operated as part of the Front's main body of forces. They attacked Berlin from the east. As a direct participant in these events, the author spreads out before the reader a complex panorama of very hard battles for each height, line, fortress-like built-up areas, small towns, blocks and each building in Berlin, which the fascists had prepared for a 360 degree impregnable defense and which were saturated with men and equipment to the maximum possible extent.

An undiminished hatred for the fascists, an extremely high degree of tenacity and intelligent initiative, determination and persistence, skill and heroism, mutual assistance and support among branch arms in combat made it possible to take the "impregnable fortresses" and the powerful centers of enemy defense. If the situation developed in such a manner that the success of the offensive could only be guaranteed at the cost of their own lives, the men undertook the acknowledged sacrifice as did the comrades in arms, Sgt N. V. Nagulva and Jrlt V. I. Levakov, who emulated Aleksandr Matrosov's heroic feat (pp.74, 75).

The Army War Council attached a great deal of importance to propaganda among German civilians and Hitler's forces on the objectives and missions of the Red Army, which was not entering as a conqueror or avenger, but as an army of liberation which was called upon to eradicate fascism, destroy militarism and guarantee peace, freedom and independence for the people of Europe, including the German people. This was accomplished with leaflets and loud-speaker sets.

Crushing the powerful defense and overcoming the fierce resistance from Hitler's forces, the men of the 5th Shock Army, along with the men of the other armies and fronts, were steadily approaching the end of the war and, on 9 May 1945 they achieved their great victory. Fascism was smashed and

broken and mankind was delivered from Hitler's subjugation. The primary role in this was played by the Soviet people and their glorious Armed Forces, led by the Communist Party.

"Our remarkable people, our citizen-heroes, our citizen-soldiers," said L. I. Brezhnev, "raised on high Lenin's banner, the banner of Great October and the banner of socialism, and victoriously carried it through the fire of the war years."<sup>4</sup>

Now came the peacetime concerns of the Army War Council and its commander, Colonel N. K. Berzarin, who had been designated the first Soviet Commandant of Berlin and commander of the Berlin Military Garrison on 24 April 1945 (p. 288).

During the Berlin Operation, our forces received a special Hq SHC directive "On Changing Attitudes toward the Germans." It recommended "establishing a German administration in the liberated areas" and instituting the position of civil affairs deputy commander.

The book "Vesna Pobedy" provides a closeup of the primary events in the post-war establishment of the first democratic government on German territory, while correctly reflecting the contributions of the AUCP (R) Central Committee, the Soviet government and the Soviet force headquarters in establishing the realistic prerequisites for returning civilian affairs to normal and for restoring city management. The immediate steps taken to supply the Berliners with food and to establish a network of aid stations diverted the danger of starvation and epidemics.

The close contacts between the Soviet military government and the German people's antifascist and patriotic forces, which were led by an action group with a GCP Central Committee representative, Walter Ulbrecht, at its head, speeded up the process of putting the nation's social, political and cultural affairs on a democratic foundation and they also energized the masses to restore the city.

The joint work of the Soviet military government and the new local German administration soon bore fruit. In mid-May, the city radio station began operating and, at the end of the month, the theater was operational. During the latter part of June, 120 movie theaters were opened and 87 metro stations, the water and sewage systems, city transportation, bakeries and a power station, with a capacity of 98,000 kilowatt hours, were brought on stream. Berlin raised up from the ruins (p. 390).

After censuring blood-stained fascism, the East German people determined their own form of social system. Under the leadership of the antifascist bloc, and primarily the GCP, they implemented the lofty ideas of democracy and denazification of the liberated areas which later became part of the German Democratic Republic, now an equal member of the united socialist community which is defending the cause of peace and progress in the world.

Unfortunately, this indispensable book does have editorial and factual shortcomings. The lack of any map or diagram of the combat operations in the approaches to Berlin and in the city itself makes it extremely difficult for readers to picture the location of the events or the area they developed in. A simple listing of built-up areas, hills, canals, rivers, major city facilities and streets does not show either the enemy's defensive system or force grouping or the dynamics of our forces combat operations during the offensive.

The enemy's specific counterattacking forces, their lines of deployment, the directions of and support for the counterattack should have been mentioned at least once, as should the countermeasures taken by our advancing forces to repel them. While the reader can put the indefinite figures on enemy forces down to a lack of intelligence on them at a specific time, the general discussions on our forces will evoke surprise (pp. 94-97, 99, 103, 110, 122, 127).

On page 117 the author states that the party commission secretaries and members "issued party cards and candidate's cards." Actually, this power was vested in the officer in charge of the political element or his deputy.

A biographical error also slipped in (p. 147). Rosa Luxemburg was not born in Germany but in Poland. She moved to Germany when she was 27 years old. Many of the minor inaccuracies, typographic errors and semantic mistakes can be attributed to superficial editing. For example, on page 14, the front's flank is called a "side"; on page 84, the battalion's right flank is designated as "the first flank"; and, on page 85, we read: "While forcing the stubborn resistance of Hitler's forces, the 9th Rifle Corps...." Stubborn resistance can be overcome or smashed but the defense is "forced."

The appendix should have contained a list of 5th Shock Army units and formations which were awarded honorifics and government decorations and also a list of Heroes of the Soviet Union who received this lofty title while part of the army. After all, during the Berlin Operation alone, their number increased by 54, reaching 224 for the army.<sup>5</sup>

However, these shortcomings do not detract from the educational value of the book, which, as a whole, is written in a good literary style. It will be of interest to veterans of the last war, army and navy commanders, political personnel and the rank and file and Soviet youth of draft age or pre-draft age.

#### FOOTNOTES

1. P. Ya. Bokov. "Vesna pobedy," Voenizdat, 1979, 446 pp.
2. Leonid Il'ich Brezhnev. "Malaya zemlya," Moscow, Politizdat, 1978, p. 16.
3. Ibid., pp. 11-12.

4. L. I. Brezhnev. "Leninskii kursom," vol 1, Moscow, Politizdat, 1970, p. 139.

5. USSR DMCA, Alphabetical Cardfile of Heroes of the Soviet Union.

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BOOK REVIEW: WORK OF MOSCOW AREA REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEES

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 5, May 80 signed to press 22 Apr 80 pp 82-83

[Review of the book "Revkom Podmoskov'ya" (Revolutionary Committees of the Moscow Area), by N. Bugay; Reviewer: Docent and Candidate of Historical Sciences Col (Res) A. Rakitskiy]

[Text] The Moscow Worker Publishing House has published a small, but substantively important book.<sup>1</sup> Using documents, the book's author relates the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship's emergency authorities in the Fall of 1919—the Moscow Area Revolutionary Committees.

The bolshevik party had prior experience in establishing the revolutionary war committees and managing them. In many of the country's areas, these committees were established during the first (1905) and second (February 1917) Russian Revolutions and also during the preparation for the Great October Socialist Revolution and while it was in progress. For example, during the revolution's first week, 21 of these committees were set up in Moscow Province (p.12). During the Civil War, when Denikin's White armies had seized Belgorod, Voronezh and Kursk in the Moscow strategic sector and were rushing toward Moscow via Orel and Tula, there was a requirement to set up revolutionary committees to mobilize the masses to repel the enemy threatening the capital.

Under V. I. Lenin's leadership, the Communist Party took immediate steps to organize the republic's defense. The Workers-Peasants Defense Council's 24 September 1919 decree published below—a photocopy of the decree is in the book (p. 9)—provides the best description of the revolution's leader who was able to comprehensively assess the situation on the front lines of the fight with the counterrevolution and to search out reserves to reinforce the defense and to oppose the enemy.



DECREE  
Workers-Peasants Defense Council

The Workers-Peasants Defense Council in its meeting of 24 September has resolved:

1. to prepare for a stubborn defense of the area bounded by Moscow, Vitebsk, the Dnepr River, Chernigov, Voronezh, Shatsk, Moscow.
2. to declare martial law throughout this entire area.
3. to establish provincial and regional revolutionary committees in this area, as well as revolutionary committees in major populated areas, at large railroad stations, etc., consisting of three representatives of local Soviet authorities; of them, one shall be the War Commissar. These revolutionary committees will organize a sustained defense of their respective areas.
4. to subordinate the area designated in this order to the Republic's Revolutionary War Council.
5. to establish a favorable environment throughout the area for stable formations; to this end: the forces organized in the area for its defense will be put on frontline rations and compensation.
6. to carry out a mandatory procurement of horses everywhere, an average of 10 horses from each county depending on the number of horses in localities, to supply the army with horses.

V. Ul'yanov (Lenin)  
Chairman, Workers-Peasants Defense Council

L. Fotiyava  
Secretary, Workers-Peasants Defense Council

Moscow, The Kremlin  
24 September 1919

The implementation of this decree at "one of the most critical, in all probability the most critical, time of the socialist revolution"<sup>2</sup> made it possible to actually realize the basic recommendation of Lenin's work "Everything for the Fight with Denikin!", which was distributed to party organizations as a letter from the Workers-Peasants Party (bol'shevik) Central Committee-- "The entire strength of the workers and peasants and the entire strength of the Soviet republic must be exerted to repel Denikin's invasion and to defeat him...."<sup>3</sup>

The subsequent course of the fight against Denikin and its ultimate outcome corroborated the brilliance of Lenin's foresight and the highly effective nature of the party's arrangements in mobilizing the republic's forces to defeat the main striking force of the counterrevolution.

It should be pointed out that this experience was used by our party during the disquieting Fall of 1941 when the fascist German hordes were rushing toward Moscow from the west. The National Defense Council instituted a state of siege for the Moscow area, established the Moscow Defense Zone and

mobilized all forces to defend the capital. The enemy was defeated and pushed back 400 km to the west of the city.

This was actually the personification of Vladimir Il'ich Lenin's thesis on defending the socialist homeland.

#### FOOTNOTES

1. N. Bugay. "Revkomy Podmoskov'ya," Moscow, "Moskovskiy Rabochiy," 1979, 120 pp.
2. V. I. Lenin. "Poln. sobr. soch." (Complete Collected Works), vol 39, p 44.
3. Ibid., p 45.

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## BOOK REVIEW: JAPAN'S MILITARY-ECONOMIC POTENTIAL

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 5, May 80 signed to press  
22 Apr 80 pp 84-85

[Review of the book "Voyenno-ekonomicheskiy potentsial sovremennoy Yaponii" (The Military-Economic Potential of Modern Japan) by S. T. Mazhorov. Reviewer: Doctor of Historical Sciences Col A. Savin]

[Text After the end of World War II, Japan made a commitment based on its new constitution not to maintain armed forces or a war industry and not to conduct war propaganda. However, three years passed and, with U.S. assistance, Japan developed an army and a short time later, a navy and air force. By 1954, the formation of Japan's armed forces was basically completed. Japanese ruling circles are presently following a policy of increasing their military potential; they are increasing military appropriations, modernizing their army, navy and air force, and strengthening their politico-military ties with the U. S. and China. S. Mazhorov's book is devoted to an analysis of Japan's economic potential for war. \*

While examining the Japanese electrical power industry--upon which the development of productive forces depends to a decisive extent--the author points out that Japan's fuel supply and processing is greatly dependent upon imports. With the increase in petroleum requirements, 99.8% of which is imported from abroad, Japanese monopolies and the government are trying to strengthen the country's economic potential by speeding up economic expansion in many of the world's nations, primarily the oil producing nations. According to 1973 data, Japan was exploring for petroleum in 18 countries over an area of almost 400,000 square kilometers. In 1976, its capital investments abroad were 19.4 billion dollars; a significant part of these investments were going to oil producing powers (p. 18).

In trying to reduce the economy's dependence on imported petroleum, Japan is stockpiling it. In 1974, Japan's current petroleum reserves (not counting

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\* S. T. Mazhorov. "Voyenno-ekonomicheskiy potentsial sovremennoy Yaponii," Moscow, "Nauka", 1979, 200 pp.

strategic reserves) would have met the country's requirements for a three-month period. Overall, petroleum and petroleum derivatives are being stockpiled based on estimated requirements for two years or more (p. 19).

Japan attaches a great deal of importance to nuclear energy. According to 1976 data, 12 nuclear power plants with a total capacity of 5,292 million kilowatt hours were operational. At that time 18 nuclear power plants with a total capacity of 14,130,000 kilowatt hours were under construction. By 1985, plans call for bringing the capacity of nuclear power plants up to 49 million kilowatt hours which is 25.6% of total power plant capacity. During the operation of these power plants, they are accumulating materials suitable for manufacturing nuclear weapons. Since Japan has not renounced the idea of making nuclear weapons and since it is working in the area of missile construction and space research, the development of nuclear weapons, if Japanese ruling circles set such a goal, would only be a matter of time (p. 26).

In describing the status and development of Japan's manufacturing industries, the author pays special attention to shipbuilding and automobile building. Even in 1956, the shipbuilding industry took first place in the capitalist world in number of ships commissioned and it is firmly holding onto first place now. Japanese shipyards provide approximately half the total tonnage of ships commissioned in the capitalist world. Of these ships, somewhat more than half are exported. In 1976, Japan built ships with a total displacement of 14,524,000 gross registered tons while the U. S. accounted for 1,047,000 gross registered tons, Great Britain accounted for 1,347,000, the FRG accounted for 1,787,000 and Sweden for 2,366,000 (p. 49). At that time, Japan's merchant fleet numbered 8,964 ships with a total displacement of 39,395,600 gross registered tons (i.e., 11 times more than in 1955). Tankers comprise 52% of the Japanese merchant fleet (p. 50). The mature shipbuilding industry will make it possible for Japan to sharply increase its naval forces; plans call for increasing them by 70% during 1980-1984. Provisions are being made to build 54 fighting ships, including Amatsukadze-class missile carriers with the Tartar missile system, helicopter carrier escorts with a displacement of 5,200 tons equipped with ship-to-air missiles; submarines with a displacement of 2,200 tons, which resemble the American nuclear-powered submarines in design; new minesweepers equipped with mine neutralization equipment which makes it possible to detonate mines using remote control devices (p. 68).

Japan's military aircraft are primarily built with licenses or documentation purchased from the U. S. Japanese industry is producing the F-4EJ fighter bomber for the Japanese AF--it is a slightly modified version of the Phantom. In 1977, the Japanese government decided to equip the AF with F-15 fighter bombers by purchasing 100 aircraft from the United States and the appropriate documentation to produce these aircraft beginning in 1978 (p. 70).

Japan is also developing military missile construction. With the help of American specialists, the Japanese have established production of the Nike and Hawk surface-to-air missiles. Domestic designed vehicle transported

...and missiles have been developed. The launching operation is the same as for the R-30 surface-to-air missile with a range of 30 km.

The missile launchers are more a variety of launchers which Japan has used to launch several missiles. The performance of the three-stage unlimited range, intercontinental missile significantly exceeds the performance of the Soviet "Soviet" and "Soviet" strategic missiles (p. 180).

Japanese industry is also producing modern models of artillery, mortars, anti-air and anti-tank weapons. In 1970, they put into production the new 120 mm gun with a 100 mm gun and a 100 mm self-propelled howitzer.

In 1970, self-propelled mortar launchers capable of launching 30 rockets simultaneously began to enter service with the Japanese army. (p. 110).

The rapid development of Japan's economic potential for war has made it possible for its ruling clique to develop an army, navy and air force which are well equipped with the latest equipment and weapons. With a force strength (including civilian employees) of 300,000, they had (as of 1 January 1970) 700 tanks, 600 self-propelled guns, 670 armored personnel carriers, approximately 1,000 aircraft and helicopters, 150 fighting ships and 300 auxiliary vessels. (p. 110-120).

All of this is evidence that Japan's ruling clique is openly laying on a building of its "self defense forces," speeding up its military preparations, continuing to support Washington and Beijing in hammering out an anti-Soviet, massive alliance and is complicating its mutual relations with the USSR by taking refuge behind a so-called "Soviet military threat."

In conclusion, it should be noted that the book under review would have been a great deal more valuable if the author had included more up-to-date data on the subject of his research, had provided an analysis of the tables included, had explained the infrequently encountered specialized terminology and had clarified the comparisons on several indicators. But, the shortcomings noted do not detract from the overall importance of this interesting book which is written at a high theoretical level and which makes wide use of valuable factual material. It will undoubtedly be of help to specialists and readers in analyzing modern Japan's military-economic potential.

REVIEWER: "Voenno-istoricheskii zhurnal", 1980

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#### BIOGRAPHICAL DATA ON GENERAL LYASHCHENKO

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL. In Russian No 5, May 80 signed to press 22 Apr 80 pp 92-94

Article by Artyr M. K. Kazakov: "General of the Army N. G. Lyashchenko: On His 70th Birthday" ]

[Text ] Among my frontline comrades in arms whose combat performance during the Great Patriotic War left me with a vivid memory, I would like to mention General of the Army Nikolay Grigor'yevich Lyashchenko. In May 1980, he will be 70 years old.

We met for the first time in 1944 in the 2nd Shock Army of the Leningrad Front where I had been assigned as artillery commander and N. G. Lyashchenko commanded the army's 90th Rifle Division at that time. The army was getting ready to participate in the Soviet forces offensive operation in the Baltic area.

By that time, Nikolay Grigor'yevich already had two years of division command experience. He arrived in the division to command the 73rd Independent Marine Rifle Brigade. I remember the words from his efficiency report: "...has proven to be well versed militarily as a formation commander who is able to organize and bring the brigade's units together and to prepare them to deliver a crushing attack against enemy forces. In combat...Lyashchenko has proven to be a bold, energetic, cool and resourceful commander. In a difficult combat environment, he was always in the weakest combat sectors and he commanded his units' combat activities from there."

This high rating of his combat performance evoked an automatic attraction to and respect for Nikolay Grigor'yevich. After spending some time in the 90th Division, I could see for myself that the efficiency report was accurate. I was greatly impressed by this huge, energetic and strong willed commander. I will not conceal the fact that I immediately had faith in his ability to get results in the forthcoming operations.

I expressed my opinion of the division CO to the commander of the 108th Rifle Corps, LtGen V. S. Polenov, and heard in response:

"General Lyashchenko is well versed militarily; he analyzes combat situations very well and has practical division command experience. His personnel have demonstrated superior military expertise for which the division was awarded the designation "Rapshinskaya" and he was decorated with the Order of Suvarov, 2nd degree."

...I want to emphasize that the story of Nikolay Grigor'yevich Lyashchenko's life is very similar to the stories of other prominent Soviet military leaders and sons of the working people who were educated by the Communist Party and who attended the school of combat during the Great Patriotic War.

"My generation did not have the opportunity of storming the Winter Palace, of making the forced crossing of the Sivash or of fighting at Volochayevka," wrote N. G. Lyashchenko in the introduction to his memoirs. \* "What fell to our lot were: the fight against the bourgeoisie's last bastion in our country—the kulaks and barmachi—laying the foundation for socialism...the first encounter with fascism in Spain, the defeat of the White Finns, the fiercest war in mankind's history—World War II—and, finally completing the development of socialism in the USSR."

Nikolay Grigor'yevich was born on 16 May 1910 at Zima Station, Irkutskaya Oblast, into the family of an internal exile (his grandfather was exiled to hard labor in Siberia). His brief childhood was spent in Kirgiziya where the entire family moved after his grandfather's pardon since the latter was not permitted to live in Central Russia.

As a 9-year old youth, Nikolay Lyashchenko began his career in a military blacksmith shop in 1919. He was a horseman, a hammerer and blacksmith. The tempestuous years of establishing Soviet authority caught the young worker up in their whirlpool. He spent those years in Sazonovka (now Anan'yevo, Kirgiz SSR). He combined night school with participation in fervent Komsomol business. This is where his political development took place. Even in 1927, activist Lyashchenko had held the elected positions of chairman of the agricultural workers labor union county committee in the village of Anan'yevo, chairman of the shop committee at the Uryuktinsk blacksmith shop and instructor of the agricultural worker labor union canton (oblast) department in the city of Przheval'sk, Kirgiz SSR.

Due to the Chinese attack on the Chinese Eastern Railroad in 1929, Lyashchenko volunteered for the Red Army. The same year, he was sent to study at the V. I. Lenin Central Asian Joint Military School. This was the beginning of his difficult life as a cadet. While mastering military affairs with enviable persistence, Lyashchenko successfully carried out the duties of a cadet sergeant and acquired command skills. In February 1931, he became a member of the party.

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\* N. G. Lyashchenko. "Gody v shineli (Yunost' komandirskaya)" (The Years in a Greatcoat: A Commander's Youth), bk 1. F. "Kyrgyzstan", 1974, p. 2.

Things were not calm at the beginning of the 30's in the remote regions of Central Asia. The basmachi were raising their heads again in the sands of the Kara-Kum. At the beginning of September 1931, there were expanded combat operations by a specially established Central Asian Military District force to wipe them out. In charge of a platoon drawn from the military school, Communist Lyashchenko participated in the defeat of the basmachi bands. For his distinction in combat, he was awarded a personal weapon.

After graduating from the school, Red Officer Lyashchenko served in the Siberian Military District's 217th Rifle Regiment from 1932 to May 1937; he was a platoon leader, an assistant company commander, a company commander, an assistant battalion commander and chief of the regimental school. The year 1936 marked a joyful event in his life--for his military training results, he was awarded the Order of the Red Star. N. G. Lyashchenko received his first order in Moscow from M. I. Kalinin.

In May 1937, Nikolay Grigor'yevich volunteered to be sent to defend the Spanish Republic and he remained there until October 1938. For successfully accomplishing his missions and for the courage and heroism displayed in combat, he was awarded the Order of the Red Banner.

Soon after his return home, the courageous fighting man's long-held dream came true--he became a student at the M. V. Frunze Military Academy and he persistently mastered the knowledge there.

After graduating from the academy, N. G. Lyashchenko was sent to the Odessa Military District as deputy commander of the 737th Rifle Regiment.

At the beginning of the Great Patriotic War, Nikolay Grigor'yevich was commanding the 972nd Rifle Regiment of the 255th Rifle Division and, in March 1942, he was assigned as the commander of the Southern Front's 106th Rifle Division. From September 1942 through February 1943, he was deputy commander of the 18th Rifle Division and, from March through June 1943, he was commander of the 73rd Independent Marine Brigade. Then, from June 1943 to February 1946, he commanded the Rifle Division which fought its way from Leningrad to Ruegen Island (Germany).

Nikolay Grigor'yevich Lyshchenko's superior military expertise and command skills revealed themselves in a number of the Great Patriotic War's operations in the Southern, Southwestern, Volkhov, Leningrad and 2nd Belorussian Fronts, during the breakthrough and lifting of the Leningrad blockade, when the White Finns were defeated and Vyborg was taken, during the liberation of the Baltic and the destruction of Hitler's forces in East Prussia at Danzig and the Oder River, during the forced crossing of the Stralsundervarwasser Strait and when Ruegen Island was taken. N. G. Lyashchenko's division was noted 17 times in the Supreme Commander in Chief's orders.

In the postwar period, General of the Army N. G. Lyashchenko, after graduating from the General Staff Military Academy, commanded units and formations

and then was assigned as first deputy commander of the Turkestan Military District; he subsequently commanded the Volga, Turkestan and Central Asian Military Districts. Nikolay Grigor'yevich always commanded the forces of these districts competently while continually displaying high party spirit and principles.

Devoted to the CPSU's cause and our great homeland, Communist Lyashchenko enjoys high prestige among officers, generals, party figures and statesmen. Since November 1977, he has been a member of the USSR Defense Ministry Inspectors General Group.

N. G. Lyashchenko's duty performance has always been and is integrated with his party and public activities. From 1956 to 1959 and from 1966 to 1971, he was a candidate member of the CPSU Central Committee; since 1971 he has been a member of the CPSU Central Committee. He was a deputy to the 7th, 8th and 9th USSR Supreme Soviets. His elected positions include: Uzbekistan CP Central Committee member and Central Committee Bureau member in 1966 and the same positions in Kazakhstan in 1971, deputy to a number of oblast Councils of People's Deputies and member of Oblast and City CPSU Committee Plenums.

For excellence in combat and for his long, distinguished service, the Soviet government has awarded Nikolay Grigor'yevich Lyashchenko 4 Orders of Lenin, an Order of the October Revolution, 4 Orders of the Red Banner, the Orders of Suvorov and Kutuzov, 2nd degree, 3 Orders of the Red Star, the Order for Service to the Homeland in the USSR Armed Forces, 3rd degree, and numerous medals. Nikolay Grigor'yevich also has foreign orders and medals.

General of the Army N. G. Lyashchenko welcomes his 70th birthday full of vim and vigor. He encouragingly says:

"I am proud that I had the opportunity to cover a lot of ground and experience a lot of trials for our party's ideals and our people. I want to share my experience in fighting for our homeland's freedom and independence and for our people's happiness with the young; I want to communicate this experience to them."

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